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"The Most Wonderful Thing Has Happened to Me in the Army": Psychology, Citizenship, and American Higher Education in World War II

Christopher P. Loss

World War II transformed American higher education forever. The education soldiers received during and after the war altered their lives and the life of the nation. Fear of the psychological maladjustment of G.I.'s in the field led top military leaders to approve the use of psychological screening mechanisms that seemed to indicate educated soldiers were superior soldiers. That conclusion brought education to the forefront of state policy making and set the stage for the creation of a vast military-educational network that culminated in the 1944 G.I. Bill of Rights.[1]

By focusing on the American state's multifaceted use of higher education in World War II, this article advances the literature on the emergence of the American university beyond the rise of the federal-academic research matrix. Without question, the ascendance of research radically altered the nature of federal-academic relations, and it is exhibit A in the birth of what some scholars call the "proministrative state." But the emphasis on big science—and the handful of elite institutions that produced it—has obscured crucial developments in American higher education that occurred outside federally funded labs.[2]

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[1] My understanding of the "American state" has been influenced by the work of political scientists, policy historians, and political sociologists interested in the study of American political development (APD). See, for example, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (New York, 1985); Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History* (Princeton, 2003); and Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development* (New York, 2004).

[2] See Laurence R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago, 1965); Roger L. Geiger, *To Advance Knowledge: The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900–1940* (New York, 1986); and Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (New York, 1993). See also Alice M. Rivlin, *The Role of the Federal Government in Financing Higher Education* (Washington, 1961), esp. 24–60; Gregory M. Hooks, *Forging the Military-Industrial Complex: World War II's Battle of the Potomac* (Urbana, 1991); Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York, 1993); Bartholomew H. Sparrow, *From the Outside In: World War II and the American State* (Princeton, 1996); Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley, 1997); and Margaret

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No development was more vital in forging a lasting partnership between the state and higher education than the passage of the G.I. Bill of Rights. Despite a recent surge of interest in the legislation, scholars have not adequately explained why education became the centerpiece of the G.I. Bill.[3] This article does that. First, I situate the legislation in the context of a rapid shift in the state's commitment to educating citizens. Consequently, this article provides a rejoinder to those scholars who have branded the G.I. Bill an exceptional piece of federal social policy. While this landmark legislation was exceptional in many ways, it looks less so when placed within the stream of wartime education initiatives that preceded the G.I. Bill. Second, I link fears of psychological maladjustment among soldiers to the state's unprecedented interest in education. Most scholars connect the G.I. Bill's education provision to the state's effort to rebuild the education economy and protect the macroeconomy by using universities as a floodgate to manage the flow of veterans into the postwar labor force. But the role of psychology in the state's attention to higher education has not been explored. This article places psychological expertise front and center. Third, I connect the state's interest in education to the exigencies of military service: for citizens to fulfill their military obligations, the state had to fulfill its educational obligations. Finally, I provide a perspective beyond that of policy-making elites by examining how the voluntary enrollment of millions of ordinary soldiers in educational programs during the war, and in colleges after it, shaped the future course of American higher education.

The complete reconstruction of American higher education during World War II was startling considering the federal government's long-standing tradition of limited involvement in educational affairs. With military mobilization and economic recovery commanding national policy makers' attention in the months after the Japanese strike at Pearl Harbor, a total overhaul of the state's approach to educating citizens, despite university leaders' determined push for closer federal relations, seemed unlikelier than ever.[4] This all changed when the Army Research Branch—the state's wartime hub for psychological research—provided America's top military leaders with opinion survey data indicating that

Pugh O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley* (Princeton, 2005). For the rise of the "prominstrative state," see Brian Balogh, "Reorganizing the Organizational Synthesis: Federal-Professional Relations in Modern America," *Studies in American Political Development*, 5 (1991), 119–72.

[3] Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (G.I. Bill of Rights), Pub. L. No. 78-346, 58 Stat. 284. See, for example, Davis R. B. Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans during World War II* (New York, 1969); Keith W. Olson, *The G.I. Bill, the Veterans, and the Colleges* (Lexington, Ky., 1974); Michael J. Bennett, *When Dreams Came True: The G.I. Bill and the Making of Modern America* (Washington, 1996); and Theda Skocpol, "The G.I. Bill and U.S. Social Policy, Past and Future," *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 14 (1997), 95–115. For accounts of the G.I. Bill that address its intersection with postwar race and gender constructions, see John Modell, Marc Goulden, and Sigurdur Magnusson, "World War II in the Lives of Black Americans: Some Findings and Interpretation," *Journal of American History*, 76 (Dec. 1989), 838–48; Hilary Herbold, "Never a Level Playing Field: Blacks and the G.I. Bill," *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (Winter 1994–1995), 104–8; Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven, 1995), 109–12; David H. Onkst, "'First a Negro . . . Incidentally a Veteran': Black World War Two Veterans and the G.I. Bill of Rights in the Deep South, 1944–48," *Journal of Social History*, 31 (Spring 1998), 517–43; Kathleen Jill Frydl, "The G.I. Bill" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2000); Ira Katznelson, "Public Policy and the Middle-Class Racial Divide after the Second World War," in *Social Contracts under Stress: The Middle Classes of America, Europe, and Japan at the Turn of the Century*, ed. Olivier Zunz, Leonard Schoppa, and Nobuhiro Hiwatari (New York, 2002), 157–77; Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, 2003), 137–46; and Margot Canaday, "Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship under the 1944 G.I. Bill," *Journal of American History*, 90 (Dec. 2003), 935–57.

[4] On higher education's pre-emptive wartime mobilization, see I. L. Kandel, *The Impact of the War upon American Education* (Chapel Hill, 1948), 12–40.

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recruits craved education and that educated soldiers were better-quality soldiers. According to the Research Branch, regardless of past education, an individual soldier's adjustment to military life improved with continuous educational programming.

While the intellectual origins of adjustment dated back to the late nineteenth century and the emergence of the professional social sciences, the Research Branch resurrected the concept in the press of wartime for wholly bureaucratic reasons. On the one hand, investigators, who migrated to the army not only from psychology but from all the social sciences, organized their research program around the study of adjustment in order to overcome stark ideological differences in the name of professional unity. On the other hand, the Research Branch discovered that framing its findings in terms of adjustment was the most expedient way to describe soldiers' overall psychological health to results-oriented policy makers unconcerned with the subtleties of disciplinary training. As Ellen Herman and others have argued, during World War II experts from across the social sciences rallied around the flag of psychology and pledged allegiance to adjustment in order to display the utility of their human technologies in the formulation of public policy.[5]

The Research Branch's technology of choice for tracking soldiers' psychological adjustment was the opinion survey. Contrasting its approach with rigid stimulus-response definitions of adjustment, the Research Branch insisted that the accurate measurement of adjustment allowed for individual preferences and tastes. The Research Branch argued that its opinion surveys could gauge the soldiers' will and thus create a more democratic military and polity.[6] The Research Branch presented evidence that better-educated sol-

[5] On the psychological profession's embrace of adjustment leading up to World War II, see James H. Capshew, *Psychologists on the March: Science, Practice, and Professional Identity in America, 1929–1969* (New York, 1999), 98–99. On the origins of the concept of adjustment, see David S. Napoli, *The Architects of Adjustment: The History of the Psychological Profession in the United States* (New York, 1980), 30–41. On the rise of psychology's policy-making authority, see Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley, 1995); Capshew, *Psychologists on the March;* Eva S. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore, 2001); and Peter Sheehy, "The Triumph of Group Therapeutics: Therapy, the Social Self, and the Triumph of Liberalism, 1900–1960" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2002). Like Herman, I employ the term "psychology" broadly to highlight the overriding importance that both social scientists and their federal patrons placed on the analysis of irrational mental processes in the study of individual and group behavior during World War II. For a complete justification for such a usage, see Herman, *Romance of American Psychology,* 4–5.

[6] For the emphasis on antidemocratic, "social control" uses of psychology and therapeutic techniques in the conventional history of the profession's ascendance and of the rise of the social sciences in general, see Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York, 1991); Andrew J. Polsky, *The Rise of the Therapeutic State* (Princeton, 1991); Daryl Michael Scott, *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880–1996* (Chapel Hill, 1997); Christopher Simpson, ed., *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences during the Cold War* (New York, 1998); Ron Robin, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton, 2001); and William Graebner, *The Engineering of Consent: Democracy and Authority in Twentieth-Century America* (Madison, 1987). For a countercurrent that emphasizes professional psychology's connection to liberal democratic politics and institutions, see Nikolas Rose, *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power, and Personhood* (New York, 1996); Katherine Pandora, *Rebels within the Ranks: Psychologists' Critique of Scientific Authority and Democratic Realities in New Deal America* (New York, 1997); Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York, 1998); Sheehy, "Triumph of Group Therapeutics"; Ian A. M. Nicholson, *Inventing Personality: Gordon Allport and the Science of Selfhood* (Washington, 2003); Andrew J. Morris, "Charity, Therapy, and Poverty: Private Social Service in the Era of Public Welfare" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2003); Catherine Gavin Loss, "Public Schools, Private Lives: American Education and Psychological Authority, 1945–1975" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2005); and Brian Balogh, "Making Pluralism 'Great': Beyond a Recycled History of the Great Society," in *The Great Society and the High Tide of Liberalism,* ed. Sidney M. Milkis and Jerome M. Milear (Amherst, 2005), 145–79. For the origins of "social control" and its commensurability with democratic politics, see Morris Janowitz, *The Last Half-Century: Societal Change and Politics in America* (Chicago, 1978), 27–52. For the classic defense of psychology as a handmaiden of liberal democratic politics, see Gordon W. Allport, "The Psychologist's Frame of Reference," *Psychological Bulletin,* 37 (Jan. 1940), 1–27.

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diers were more efficient, exhibited higher morale, and were less likely to desert or suffer psychoneurotic breakdown than their educationally deprived peers: individuals who were educated most soldiered best. Military and education policy makers were galvanized by these findings and joined forces to create the Army Information and Education Division (IE Division)—the education clearinghouse for the common soldier. The IE Division, using innovative pedagogical approaches to the mass education of millions of average soldiers, confirmed that higher education created psychologically adjusted citizens.

The alleged positive psychological influence of education on the adjustment of individuals to life in the military meant little to the common soldiers who devoured the IE Division's educational offerings. Rather, education provided soldiers with a sanctuary from the utter boredom and anonymity of military service. As an accepted retreat from the drudgery of army life, education offered soldiers pleasurable as well as potentially rewarding opportunities for intellectual fulfillment and for improved postwar economic prospects.[7]

In other words, the G.I.'s who flocked to the army's education programs did so for reasons decidedly different from those hypothesized by the Research Branch. Military leaders looked to education as an instrument to create the soldiers the army most wanted to have, while soldiers gravitated toward education because it offered a pathway to becoming the citizens they most wanted to be. Though they had different ideas about the benefits of higher education, by the postwar period the state and its subjects agreed it was central to American citizenship. Even as the battlefield triumphs of the federal-academic research matrix were more visible during World War II, in the long run both the state and the university bet the future on education and the student-citizens that it produced.[8]

Psychological Reconnaissance: The Army Research Branch and the Measurement of Soldier Opinion

On the eve of America's entry into World War II, soldiers and civilians suffered from what the economist John Kenneth Galbraith later dubbed "depression psychosis." High unemployment, public apathy toward American involvement in the war, and low national morale concerned military and political leaders. Despite New Deal programs, roughly 15 percent of American workers remained unemployed as late as 1940. Members of the Roosevelt administration openly complained about the public's "lackadaisical attitude" toward war and wondered whether it would pose a serious "defense problem." Public opinion polls relayed as much. According to a May 1941 Princeton Public Opinion Project poll, only 10 percent of Americans thought the country should declare war on Germany and Italy. Moreover, the *New York Times* reported that military morale was at an

[7] On the loneliness and banality of military service, see Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* (New York, 1989), esp. 72–80.

[8] For the concept of citizenship, which has guided many scholarly works in American history over the past decade, see John Bodnar, ed., *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define Their Patriotism* (Princeton, 1996); Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven, 1997); Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York, 1998); Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton, 1999); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 2001); and Cohen, *Consumers' Republic*. The role of education—especially higher education—in demarcating the bounds of twentieth-century citizenship has been largely overlooked in the literature. For one notable exception, on which this article builds, see Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life* (New York, 1998).

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all-time low, a result of "spotty leadership . . . lack of imagination . . . and a feeling that time in the Army is wasted." Against this backdrop of general malaise, the embryonic Army Research Branch went to work.[9]

The creation of the Army Research Branch was one of the minor administrative developments of the major March 1941 War Department reorganization, the most important since Elihu Root, the secretary of war in the McKinley administration, had restructured the military forty years earlier. The 1941 reorganization was spearheaded by Gen. George C. Marshall, the army chief of staff, and Henry L. Stimson, the secretary of war, following a series of humbling strategy sessions with Britain's far better-coordinated military-planning team, the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Committee. In addition to creating a unified Allied command structure between the United States and Britain, the 1941 reorganization stimulated the ad hoc formation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which became the president's official military advisory council following the passage of the National Security Act of 1947; reduced the number of individuals with direct access to the army's chief of staff from sixty-one to six; and established three "super commands": Army Ground Forces, Army Air Forces, and Army Service Forces. The contours of the contemporary military establishment were delineated in the reorganization.[10]

Given the scope of the 1941 reorganization, the simultaneous shake-up of the Army Morale Branch, followed by the creation of the Research Branch, raised few eyebrows in or outside the military. Established the previous year to manage soldiers' physical welfare—food, clothing, and off-duty activities—the Morale Branch was failing miserably in fulfilling its charge according to reports from the field and the national media. This concerned Marshall, who was particularly sensitive to the personal needs of common soldiers. Marshall's commitment to soldiers' livelihoods stemmed from his own four-decade slog from lowly Virginia Military Institute (VMI) cadet to army chief of staff.[11]

Two additional factors help explain Marshall's interest in soldiers' well-being and professional development. First, Marshall credited his own success to hard work and determination as much as to political connections or battlefield glory, both of which eluded him as a young soldier. Second, in the year Marshall graduated in the middle of his class of thirty-four cadets at VMI (1901), Elihu Root's new professionalized army awaited him. Beyond centralizing the nation's military forces, Root's reforms sought to replace political patronage and nepotism with military training and education as the officially sanctioned means of career advancement. Professional soldiering meshed perfectly with Marshall's own administrative sensibilities, and he made the most of the specialized training opportunities afforded him in the post-Root era. Like several other rising stars of his generation, including Dwight D. Eisenhower and Omar Bradley, Marshall compensated for the nation's relative isolation and dearth of military engagements during the interwar period by

[9] John Kenneth Galbraith, *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power* (Boston, 1956), 63–83, esp. 63; George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940–1973* (Lawrence, 1993), 34; *New York Times,* May 11, 1941, p. E3; *ibid.,* June 1, 1941, p. E5; *ibid.,* July 13, 1941, p. E3; *ibid.,* Aug. 24, 1941, p. E8; *ibid.,* Aug. 31, 1941, p. E8; *ibid.,* Sept. 23, 1941, p. E3.

[10] On Elihu Root's reforms, see Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (New York, 1987), 212–47. On the 1941 reorganization, see Mark A. Stoler, *George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (Boston, 1989), 90–94; and John D. Millett, *The Organization and Role of the Army Service Forces* (Washington, 1954), 23–41.

[11] On the morale problem, see Herman, *Romance of American Psychology,* 48–81. On the Morale Branch, see Cyril O. Houle et al., *The Armed Services and Adult Education* (Washington, 1947), 15–19. On George C. Marshall at Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and through World War I, see Stoler, *Marshall,* 15–48.

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shrewdly navigating the army bureaucracy. Guided by his own experiences, Marshall understood all too well that for most soldiers the benefit of military service often occurred, if it occurred at all, away from the field of battle. As the chief of staff of the army, it was his responsibility to make military service a worthwhile experience. The Morale Branch's alleged ineffectiveness thus forced Marshall to act.[12]

First, with Stimson's blessing Marshall removed the Morale Branch from the Adjutant General's Office and placed it under his own supervision. He then elevated and renamed it, making it the Special Services Division and dividing it into four interdependent branches—Welfare and Recreation, Public Relations, Services, and Planning and Research—the last of which he charged with collecting and analyzing information about current and future morale problems in the army. Finally, Marshall commissioned Frederick H. Osborn to serve as the division's new director. Osborn—an accomplished amateur demographer and longtime advocate of using education as a tool for social progress—proved to be an especially inspired choice. As the previous chairman of the Civilian Committee on Selective Service and of the Joint Army-Navy Committee on Welfare and Recreation, Osborn was well acquainted with the military's ongoing struggle with soldier morale. As a trustee of several leading philanthropic organizations committed to sponsoring social science research, including the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government and the Carnegie Corporation, Osborn enjoyed ready access to the country's leading social and behavioral scientists. Osborn had little difficulty recruiting the University of Chicago sociologist Samuel A. Stouffer, whom he had met while working on the Social Science Research Council Committee on Social Adjustment in 1940, to lead the Research Branch; 130 additional personnel from a host of professional backgrounds rounded out Stouffer's staff. Between 1942 and 1945, the Research Branch administered two hundred different opinion surveys—on topics ranging from alcohol consumption to race relations, from combat performance to demobilization plans—to approximately five hundred thousand American soldiers worldwide. The complete findings of the Research Branch were later published in a four-volume series entitled *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II,* the first volume of which was *The American Soldier: Adjustment during Army Life.*[13]

At the outbreak of war, however, it seemed unlikely that the Research Branch would be permitted to conduct its opinion surveys. On May 24, 1941, Stimson banned opinion polling in the military, believing "anonymous opinion or criticism, good or bad, is destructive in its effect on a military organization where accepted responsibility on the part

[12] On Marshall at VMI, see William Frye, *Marshall: Citizen Soldier* (New York, 1947), 44–64, esp. 61. On his interwar career, see Stoler, *Marshall,* 49–67.

[13] On the Morale Branch reorganization, see Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 15–19; Brig. Gen. Wade H. Haislip, Assistant Chief of Staff, "Memorandum For The Chief Of Staff: Creation of a separate branch of military morale," March 3, 1941, Historical File of the Research Branch, 1941–1945, box 969, entry 89, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, RG 330 (National Archives, College Park, Md.); and Henry L. Stimson to Adjutant General, "Reorganization of the Morale Division of the Office of the Adjutant General," memo, March 8, 1941, *ibid.* On Frederick Osborn, see H. I. Brock, "Army's Morale Builder," *New York Times Magazine,* Sept. 7, 1941, pp. 12, 19; and Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), 175–76. On the professional training of the Research Branch's personnel, see Peter Buck, "Adjusting to Military Life: The Social Sciences Go to War, 1941–1950," in *Military Enterprise and Technological Change: Perspectives on the American Experience,* ed. Merritt Roe Smith (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 212–16. For the opinion surveys, see Samuel A. Stouffer et al., *The American Soldier: Adjustment during Army Life* (Princeton, 1949), 12. The other three volumes of the *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II* series are Samuel A. Stouffer et al., *The American Soldier: Combat and Its Aftermath* (Princeton, 1949); Carl Hovland et al., *Experiments in Mass Communication* (Princeton, 1949); and Louis Guttman et al., *Measurement and Prediction* (Princeton, 1950).

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of every individual is fundamental." Memories of World War I and George Creel's Committee on Public Information (CPI), which fanned as much popular opposition to the war as support, had soured Stimson on using cutting-edge but hardly statistically bulletproof opinion-gathering techniques to take the pulse of American soldiers.[14]

Marshall, in contrast, thought advancements in survey design and administration during the interwar years made possible the activities of the Research Branch, even with the secretary's ban. Using opinion surveys designed with the help of the psychologist Rensis Likert of the Program Survey Division of the Department of Agriculture, the Research Branch submitted that its surveys differed radically from the dichotomous polling techniques popularized by George Gallup. Namely, the Research Branch's surveys were self-administered, offered soldiers a range of possible respones, and provided them with space for "free commentary," where they could write about whatever they wished.[15]

Persuaded that the surveys were instruments of democratic decision making, Marshall personally authorized the Research Branch to initiate its first study. On December 8, 1941, a dozen members of the Research Branch descended on the army's Ninth Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to administer Planning Survey I to nineteen hundred new recruits. The results of the Fort Bragg study offered the military, which harbored suspicion of the largely civilian-led Research Branch, compelling evidence that better-educated soldiers adjusted more quickly to military life and possessed significantly higher morale. In the first months of 1942, Osborn delivered the Research Branch's secret Fort Bragg results to Marshall, who received the report with "flattering enthusiasm" and promptly advised Osborn to proceed with Planning Survey II. Not only did the report confirm Marshall's own beliefs about the importance of educated soldiers, it also provided him with ammunition to fight for wider educational and research activities throughout the military.[16]

One year after Pearl Harbor, from the Research Branch's new office space in the partially built Pentagon building, Stouffer and his staff prepared the first edition of *What the Soldier Thinks* for limited internal distribution. Using survey data gathered at Fort Bragg and sixty-three additional sites, the report provided the military command with a broad educational overview of "the new kind of 'raw material' making up [the] Army." Significantly, in World War I only 20 percent of draftees had received instruction beyond grade school; by World War II 67 percent had. High school and college graduation rates had escalated as well. For example, among the "old regulars"—enlistees who had joined the army prior to July 1, 1940—only 25 percent were high school (21 percent) or college (4 percent) graduates. By way of comparison, 41 percent of draftees had earned a high school (30 percent) or college (11 percent) diploma. "Today's soldier," the report read, "is not the same as the '1917–1918' model." Considering the vast differences in performance between "better educated and less educated" soldiers, the Research Branch warned mili-

[14] "History of the Army Research Branch to 1 Feb. 1946," n.d., p. 3, Historical File of the Research Branch, box 970, entry 89, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. On Stimson's distrust of propaganda, see Allan M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942–45* (New Haven, 1978), 44–45. On George Creel, see David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (1980; New York, 2004), 74–75.

[15] "History of the Army Research Branch to 1 Feb. 1946," pp. 3–11. On the differences between George Gallup's polls and the surveys developed by Rensis Likert and Samuel A. Stouffer, see Jean M. Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence, 1890–1960* (Berkeley, 1987), 72–74, 114–27, 154–61, 166–67. On Marshall's crucial support for the activities of the Research Branch, see Stouffer et al., *American Soldier,* vii, 13.

[16] *What the Soldier Thinks,* 1 (Dec. 1942), 3; "History of the Army Research Branch to 1 Feb. 1946," 11–18.

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tary leaders against viewing "the problems of World War II . . . through the spectacles of World War I."[17]

The first edition of *What the Soldier Thinks* elaborated upon the purported, and seemingly endless, benefits of an educated military. "Better-educated" men (soldiers with at least a high school diploma) were more likely to choose combat duty than were "less-educated" men (soldiers without a high school diploma). The less educated tended to be "stay at homes" and less "internationally minded" than their better-educated peers. Subsequent research suggested that highly educated soldiers "tended eventually to get better assignments" and that they were "more favorable than others on attitudes reflecting personal commitment to the war." Moreover, better-educated soldiers were more likely to feel that "they should have been drafted, more likely to say that they could be more useful to their country as soldiers than as war workers," and they exhibited a "higher personal esprit" and interest in understanding the nature of their service duties and obligations. According to the second edition of *What the Soldier Thinks* (1943), "the educated soldier knows more about the war and has greater facility in acquiring further knowledge." Less-educated soldiers, on the other hand, were four times more likely to go absent without leave (AWOL) or to suffer a psychoneurotic breakdown than better-educated men. Relying on educational attainment as its central frame of reference, the Research Branch established a positive correlation between education and adjustment. In short, educated soldiers were better soldiers. But would they also make better citizens?[18]

Having the "best educated Army in history" posed a unique set of challenges. The survey data pointed to several disturbing developments. First, men with some college education were more critical of the army than others surveyed. One new recruit complained, "All my training has been repetitious since I left Training Center and I haven't learned anything new since that thirteen-week period." The monotony of training camp especially exasperated the better educated, who exhibited little difficulty in comprehending and following the army's rules, regulations, and codes of conduct. "I wish the officers would treat us like intelligent adults," opined an exasperated soldier. "Men inducted into the Army are those who were independent in thought and action, in other words worked for a living. I wish there would be less of the monotonous repetition. Treat a man like a nitwit and he'll finally act like one."[19]

Second, pervasive draftee discontent caused tension between the old regulars and better-educated newcomers. Even though few of the less-educated soldiers commented at length, those that did made their feelings of dissatisfaction well known. "My own pet gripe is that Selective Service men are treated much better than we soldier. They grunt and gripe too much," explained a discouraged enlisted man. Another member of the old guard believed that army discipline had slipped since the arrival of the draftees and noted that they "have been allowed to wise off too much" and that "many of them are too smart for their own good." A wry survey participant described the situation thus: "Sense the number of men [draftees] has to be here the regulars men get put on K.P. [kitchen

[17] *What the Soldier Thinks,* 1 (Dec. 1942), 3, 8–9, 11–13.

[18] *Ibid.*, 18–19; Stoffer et al., *American Soldier,* 59–60; *What the Soldier Thinks,* 2 (Aug. 1943), 3, 29–31, 34–35. On the relationship between soldiers' education level and psychoneurotic breakdowns, see Norman Q. Brill, "Station and Regional Hospitals," in *Neuropsychiatry in World War II: Zone of Interior,* ed. Robert S. Anderson (2 vols., Washington, 1966), I, 255–95, esp. 270.

[19] *What the Soldier Thinks,* 2 (Aug. 1943), 28–29; Stouffer et al., *American Soldier,* 70–71.

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patrol] over the week-end so the . . . boys can go home. I don't like that cause I . . . got put on K.P. during Easter. I think I am as good as any man. I mean what is good for the goose is good for the gander." That college-educated draftees were ten times as likely to achieve officer candidacy undoubtedly contributed to the enlisted men's growing sense of injustice.[20]

Finally, Research Branch data suggested that regardless of education level, a majority of men felt disenchanted with military service after one year. Soldier malaise, however, was not the product of inattention to soldiers' physical welfare. Studies revealed that a majority of soldiers enjoyed the army's food, felt adequately outfitted in their government-issue olive drabs, and approved of the medical attention they received. The source of discontent lay in the army's perceived inattention to soldiers' emotional welfare—a factor "less tangible," according to Osborn, "but equally important to morale." "The men are usually kept in the dark as to what they are accomplishing, personally or in units," grumbled one soldier, "and questions as to the reasons for orders are barked down immediately." Another soldier concurred: "My first month down here I was allowed to give my opinion on one occasion. I was then told to shut up. . . . I try to keep suggestions to myself now and just take orders."[21]

The Research Branch's self-serving findings, which were used to bolster its organizational prestige and policy-making authority, pointed to possible remedies for the soldiers' disquiet. Research Branch members already believed that highly educated soldiers were better soldiers, but survey data indicated that soldiers desired education and that it could be used to maintain—even enhance—adjustment. A survey administered in the European theater disclosed that 97 percent of soldiers felt that knowledge of current events made them better soldiers. Nearly as high a percentage revealed that they enjoyed listening to talks by their commanding officers on war-related issues even as a survey conducted in another theater of operations revealed that many soldiers were suspicious of military-generated information. The Research Branch's findings demonstrated that American soldiers wanted to learn, desired information on the war effort, and profited emotionally when engaged in educational activities. A fifteen-camp study conducted during the summer of 1942 found that nearly 90 percent of soldiers liked listening to news on the radio about the progress of the war, stories from home, as well as "reports and comments on current happenings." Another study indicated that "letter-writing . . . and magazine reading" were two frequent off-duty activities and that soldiers made regular use of the army's extensive library network. Although lonely, isolated soldiers found the most satisfaction staring at seminude centerfolds in such publications as *Yank: The Army Weekly,* additional research indicated that contemporary fiction, westerns, humors, and historical novels ranked among soldiers' favorite reading materials. Furthermore, the Research Branch discovered that motion pictures aimed at explaining the war effort had a "positive effect" on soldier adjustment at every education level. A study conducted at three Replacement Training Centers in December 1942 of Frank Capra's *Prelude to War,* the first film in the *Why We Fight* series, concluded that "when a particular topic is featured and hammered hard, even the minute facts are remembered. But when a topic—although important—is handled incidentally, little increase in knowledge is evidenced." Marshall—a former army

[20] Stouffer et al., *American Soldier,* 68–69; *Higher Education: Semimonthly Publication of the Federal Security Agency,* 1 (March 1, 1945), 3.

[21] Stouffer et al., *American Soldier,* 68, 70; *What the Soldier Thinks,* 1 (Dec. 1942), 36–39, 44–48.

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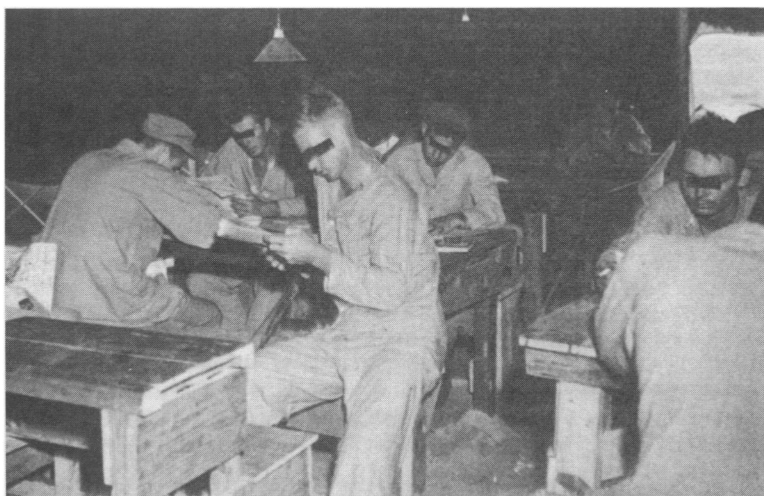

Soldiers—their identities hidden—read at a Red Cross reading room at the 82nd Field Hospital in Okinawa, Japan, May 1945. The Army Neuropsychiatric Consultants Division included reading therapy in its rehabilitation regimen for emotionally damaged soldiers. The success of education therapy persuaded the Army Research Branch that continuous educational programming could ward off psychological deterioration of all sorts. *From Department of the Army,* Neuropsychiatry in World War II *(Washington, 1973).*

instructor who described his pedagogical philosophy as an exercise in directing "men by trying to make them see the way to go"—praised the films. They helped soldiers understand the events leading up to the United States' entry into the war. "Knowledge of these facts," he concluded, "is an indispensable part of military training."[22]

Simultaneous advances in the use of education therapy by psychiatrists in army hospitals and on the front lines supported the Research Branch's findings linking education and adjustment. Building on therapeutic techniques originally honed during World War I in the treatment of shell shock, World War II psychiatrists viewed education itself as an effective rehabilitative therapy. Clinical research on educational therapeutics was widespread, but the most far-reaching advances originated in Topeka, Kansas, home of the Menninger Clinic, operated by the brothers William and Karl Menninger. A groundbreaking 1939 Menninger Clinic study demonstrated the benefits of education therapy in the treatment of mentally ill patients. The study's preliminary findings indicated that education could be used to remold maladjusted personalities. In 1942 a follow-up investigation confirmed the first study's findings and prompted William Menninger to institute educational offerings as a permanent component of his clinic's therapeutic regimen. Classes were offered in foreign languages, dietetics, music appreciation, current affairs, and jewelry making, among other subjects. Nearly 90 percent of patients availed themselves of at least one of the clinic's courses. According to Menninger, educational therapy

[22] For the Research Branch's professional aspirations, see Buck, "Adjusting to Military Life," 203–52. On soldiers' reading habits, see John Jamieson, "Books and the Soldier," *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 9 (Autumn 1945), 320–32. *What the Soldier Thinks,* 1 (Dec. 1942), 54–55, 58–59, 62–63, 64–65; *ibid.*, 2 (Aug. 1943), 74–75; *Prelude to War,* dir. Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak (U.S. War Deparment, 1942); Stoler, *George C. Marshall,* 25; *What the Soldier Thinks,* 2 (Aug. 1943), 88.

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simultaneously benefited patients and clinicians: success in the classroom increased patients' self-confidence and thus provided clinicians with a new and valuable way of measuring patients' progress toward adjustment.[23]

The Menninger Clinic's interwar experimentation in educational therapeutics had a profound effect on the organization of the military's psychiatric services. As chief of the army Neuropsychiatric Consultants Division, which employed one-quarter of the nation's psychiatrists during the war, William Menninger used his Topeka clinic as a model for the army's neuropsychiatric rehabilitation program. Described by an army psychiatrist late in the war as "simultaneously diagnostic, educational or re-educational, and therapeutic," the army's multifaceted treatment model was replicated throughout the armed services. The combination of rest along with individual, group, occupational, and educational therapy provided psychiatrists with an effective means to return psychologically damaged soldiers to military service quickly. In order to "divert the mind, relieving it of the anxieties and the strains of war," army psychiatrists commenced educational reconditioning "at the moment convalescence begins while the patient is still in bed." The military credited such treatment with the rehabilitation of 85 percent of all psychologically damaged soldiers committed to military hospitals during the war.[24]

Research Branch data likewise demonstrated that continuing education aided in the personal adjustment of soldiers regardless of circumstance. While psychiatrists pointed to education's rehabilitative functions, psychologists insisted that education possessed important prophylactic uses. Readily available education and information resources and activities could increase soldier morale, improve adjustment, and help avert the onset of psychoneurotic breakdowns. Believing, as Stouffer did, that "one of the uses of education is to help individuals handle their environments realistically," the U.S. Army retooled itself as a school where commanders were "teachers" and soldiers "students."[25]

Psychological Assault: Educating the Common Soldier

Reports from the civilian sphere—from which the bulk of the wartime army had to be raised—corroborated the army's fear that the nation was in an education crisis. While popular support for the war effort jumped significantly after Pearl Harbor, anecdotal

[23] On the treatment of shell shock during World War I, see Nathan G. Hale, *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917–1985* (New York, 1995), 17–19. On the wartime development of educational therapeutics, see, for example, Salomon Gagnon, "Is Reading Therapy?," *Diseases of the Nervous System,* 7 (July 1942), 206–12; George S. Stevens, "Education and the Control of Alcoholism," *ibid.*, 8 (Aug. 1942), 238–42; Lewis Barbato, "The State Mental Hospital—An Educational Center," *ibid.*, 9 (Sept. 1945), 269–75; and W. B. Brookover, "Education in the Rehabilitation of Maladjusted Personalities," *Journal of Educational Sociology,* 20 (Feb. 1947), 332–40. On the Menninger Clinic study, see Peggy Ralston, "Educational Therapy in a Psychiatric Hospital," *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic,* 4 (March 1940), 41–50; and William C. Menninger, "Experiments with Educational Therapy in a Psychiatric Institution," *ibid.*, 6 (March 1942), 38, 43, 44. For a history of the clinic, see Lawrence J. Friedman, *Menninger: The Family and the Clinic* (New York, 1990). On the changes in American psychiatry wrought by World War II, see Hale, *Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States,* 185–299.

[24] Kyle Crichton, "Repairing War-Cracked Minds," *Colliers,* Sept. 23, 1943, pp. 22–23, 54; Harry L. Freedman, "The Mental-Hygiene-Unit Approach to Reconditioning Neuropsychiatric Casualties," *Mental Hygiene,* 29 (1945), 269–302, esp. 270; Walter E. Barton, "The Reconditioning and Rehabilitating Program in Army Hospitals," *American Journal of Psychiatry,* 101 (March 1945), 610; *New York Times,* July 23, 1944, p. L6.

[25] Stouffer et al., *American Soldier,* 60. On the army's recasting itself as a school, see, for example, Philip Wylie and William W. Muir, *The Army Way: A Thousand Pointers for New Soldiers Collected from Officers and Men of the U.S. Army* (New York, 1940), 1–6; War Department, *Army Life* (Washington, 1944), esp. 79–82; and Fussell, *Wartime,* 52–65.

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evidence suggested that a majority of Americans had little knowledge of why the United States was fighting. Ignorance of U.S. history, which a scant 18 percent of colleges required students to take, was cited as one cause of the problem. Report after report concurred with a massive 1942 *New York Times* study: "American college students are . . . ignorant of even the most elementary aspects of United States History." Fewer than half of all respondents could name four freedoms guaranteed to citizens in the Bill of Rights; even fewer could name two powers granted to the Congress by the Constitution; and still fewer could identify two of Thomas Jefferson's contributions to the economic and social development of the United States. The Columbia University history professor Allan Nevins captured the sense of dismay within the nation's educational establishment: "What appalls . . . is not merely the blindness that confuses William James with Jesse James and places St. Louis on the Atlantic but the inability of our young people to draw from the nation's past an understanding of the significance of America in the world's history." Among Research Branch personnel, these troubling developments in higher education merely confirmed what they already knew: even America's best and brightest needed further education.[26]

The flurry of media criticism of American education incited reform efforts that extended well beyond the college campus. As college leaders around the country retooled their general education and history requirements to meet the needs of the wartime emergency, the armed forces expanded and consolidated their stockpile of education and information programs. In October 1943 Marshall again reorganized the Special Services Division. First, the purely recreational components of Special Services (that is, athletics and entertainment) were removed from Osborn's control and reconstituted as a separate division. Second, Marshall divided Osborn's streamlined Special Services Division, which would be officially recognized as the IE Division in February 1944, into four subordinate branches: Orientation, Information, Education, and Research. Those branches directed the army's worldwide radio network, published its collection of soldier newspapers and magazines, and coordinated its growing number of educational programs—everything from recruit orientation and college-level correspondence study during the war to the organization of army university centers after it.[27]

The housing of these diverse services under the roof of the IE Division was an important step in the army's evolving understanding of soldier welfare. To the chief of staff, however, it meant much more. The IE Division would provide soldiers with genuine opportunities for self-improvement and uplift while simultaneously helping prevent soldier maladjustment. In an internal War Department memorandum issued in the wake of the formation of the division, Marshall disclosed that "the most important factor contributing to the spread of psychoneurotics in our Army has been the nation's educational program and environmental background since 1920." Marshall's own bouts with exhaustion

[26] *New York Times,* April 4, 1942, p. A1; *ibid.,* April 4, 1942, p. E10; Allan Nevins, "Why We Should Know Our History," *New York Times Magazine,* April 18, 1943, pp. 18, 25.

[27] On curricular changes in American higher education during World War II, see, for example, Wilford M. Aikin, "What's Wrong with Our Schools?," *New York Times Magazine,* Sept. 7, 1941, pp. 9, 18, 28; *New York Times,* March 8, 1942, p. D5; Allan Nevins, "American History for Americans," *New York Times Magazine,* May 3, 1942, pp. 6, 28; *New York Times,* June 28, 1942, p. D5; *ibid.,* Oct. 4, 1942, p. D5; and *ibid.,* Oct. 18, 1942, p. D5. On the October 1943 reorganization, see Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 23–24; and Jack Edward Pulwers, "The Information and Education Programs of the Armed Forces: An Administrative and Social History, 1940–1945" (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1983), 191–97.

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and depression (for which he was hospitalized twice) may have contributed to his fear of soldiers' psychoneuroses. What is certain, however, is that by the closing months of 1943 the army's education program had achieved the organizational integrity that Marshall and Osborn believed it deserved.[28]

The army's growing faith in education as a weapon of adjustment must be weighed against its simultaneous interest in democratic propaganda. Like their totalitarian enemies, American war planners worried endlessly about their soldiers' psychological strength and turned to propaganda to win the battle for hearts and minds. As it had during World War I, the federal government established a propaganda agency, the Office of War Information (OWI), to coordinate the nation's propaganda offensive. But compared with Creel's CPI and the tens of hundreds of voluntarily organized branches of the American Protective League that it spawned and supported, the OWI was underfunded and received even less interest from the public. So, while the executive branch and military continued to romance the phantom of propaganda during the war, widespread congressional and public suspicion of such efforts compelled policy makers to look for other means of strengthening soldiers' fighting faith. Education presented the best—and most democratic—alternative.[29]

Ultimately, the U.S. Army pinned its hopes on education for reasons that were at once manipulative, practical, and heartfelt. First, education was a democratic form of propaganda that offered soldiers a subtle but clear affirmation of liberal values. The very freedoms that Americans were fighting for were invoked each time a soldier put pen to paper, read a book, or dropped a completed correspondence course in the mail. Second, education promised improved postwar economic prospects by providing soldiers with an avenue for skills enhancement and professional credentials. Third, and most critically, education gave soldiers psychological strength. In short, the IE Division believed that if it used pedagogy and propaganda before, during, and after combat, American G.I.'s would be better off as soldiers and citizens.[30]

For some three hundred thousand draftees, educational training commenced with a stint in an Army Special Training Unit literacy program. The discovery of a less than "literate America" derived from the Selective Service Administration's own examination of the draftee population and the release of confirmatory 1940 census data. Compared with previous census data, which classified as illiterate only persons with "no education whatever," the 1940 census probed deeper into citizens' educational backgrounds. This census included the new category of functional illiterates, defined as people with fewer than four years of schooling. By expanding the definition of illiteracy in this way, the 1940 census counted 10 million Americans (and nearly 14 percent of the draftee population) as "functionally illiterate"—twice the number tallied in the 1920 census using the more restrictive definition of illiteracy.[31]

[28] Marshall to General Surles, Dec. 30, 1943, in *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, ed. Larry I. Bland (5 vols., Lexington, Va., 1981), IV, 221–25. On Marshall's bouts with depression, see Stoler, *George C. Marshall*, 28–29, 86–87.

[29] On differences between democratic and enemy propaganda, see War Department, *G.I. Roundtable Series: What Is Propaganda?* (Washington, 1944), 1–17. On restraints placed on propagandizing, see Winkler, *Politics of Propaganda*, esp. 38–72; and Brett Gary, *The Nervous Liberals: Propaganda Anxieties from World War I to the Cold War* (New York, 1999), esp. 15–54.

[30] *New York Times*, Aug. 27, 1944, p. E9. On the state's decision to use education and propaganda, see Neil Minihan, "History of the Information and Education Division," 1973–1976, pp. 1–3, Frederick Osborn Papers (American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pa.).

[31] Lewis B. Hershey et al., *Selective Service in Peacetime: First Report of the Director of Selective Service* (Washington, 1942), 174; Eli Ginzberg, *The Uneducated* (New York, 1953), 17; Kandel, *Impact of the War upon American*

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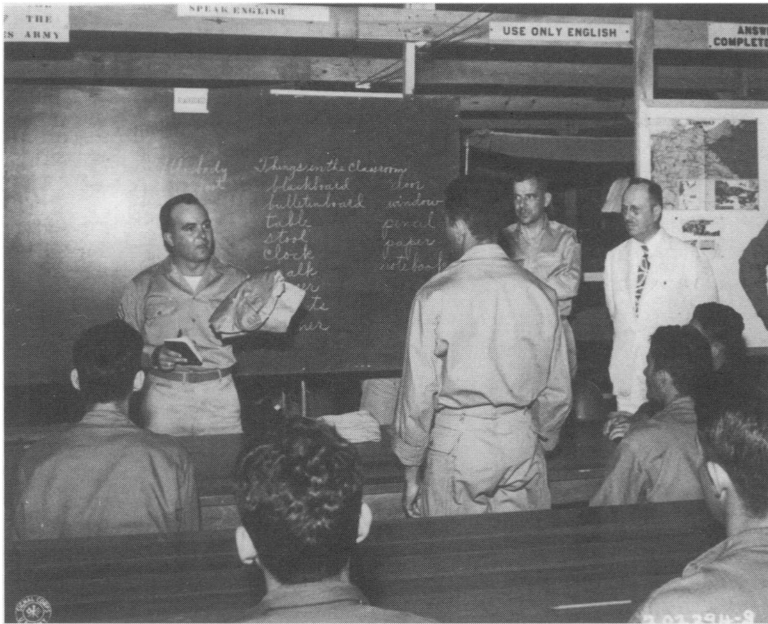

Manpower shortages in the army and private industry during World War II led the War Department to create Special Training Units to teach functionally illiterate recruits to speak, read, and write English at a fourth-grade level. In this photograph taken on February 27, 1945, an instructor at the Special Training Center at Camp O'Reilly, Puerto Rico, uses an army uniform to teach a new recruit the basics of the English language as Gov. Antonio Fernos Isern (white suit) looks on. *Courtesy George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Virginia.*

The nation's failing educational health at home boded poorly for democracy's victory abroad. The illiteracy problem crossed all regional boundaries. That the South and its African American inhabitants surfaced as the nation's most educationally deprived region and people was hardly surprising. Spartan state-level funding and the lax enforcement of compulsory attendance laws in the name of Jim Crow had been the object of public scrutiny and ridicule for decades. What did surprise policy makers was the discovery that New York and Pennsylvania were home to as many functionally illiterate citizens as states south of the Mason-Dixon line. The illiteracy problem also threatened the production of war matériel and the enlistment of soldiers. As early as 1942, the United States Chamber of Commerce reported that half of the nation's war contractors had to reduce production because of the shortage of literate, skilled labor. Inside the military, meanwhile, the War Department's insistence on "functional literacy" resulted in the rejection of some five hundred thousand otherwise acceptable recruits during the first two years of the draft.[32]

The magnitude of the nation's literacy deficit forced the state's hand. In 1943 the War Department authorized the formation of 239 Special Training Units to help illiterate

Education, 41–45; *New York Times,* June 21, 1942, p. D5. On the 1940 census and prior incarnations, see Samuel Goldberg, *Army Training of Illiterates in World War II* (New York, 1951), 15n36; and Sanford Winston, *Illiteracy in the United States* (Chapel Hill, 1930), 9.

[32] According to the Chamber of Commerce, New York had 1,020,000 poorly educated, functionally illiterate citizens, while Pennsylvania had 696,000. See *Washington Post,* May 30, 1942, p. 7.

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draftees ("Grade V" recruits in the army's official personnel classification typology) learn how to read at or above fourth-grade level. Some literacy instructors were pulled from the army's own ranks, but more often than not they were recruited directly from colleges and universities. To ensure consistency from one literacy unit to another, the army organized three national training conferences to discuss instructional techniques and to distribute literacy guides. Initially the army used remaindered literacy materials from the Works Progress Administration, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. *Meet Private Pete: A Soldier's Reader* replaced those outmoded materials. The *Reader* was based on a functional approach to literacy that combined filmstrips with reading and writing exercises in order to connect lessons to a soldier's "daily life in the Army." The *Reader* followed the fictitious exploits of Pvt. Pete Smith and his best friend Daffy and offered soldiers a humorous glimpse into the everyday experiences of living and working in the U.S. Army. Some Grade V's rebuffed the army's literacy training, but the overwhelming majority responded positively to it. "More than anything else," confessed one such soldier, "I want to learn how to read . . . to read letters from home . . . to know what's going on in other places . . . to read the things the other fellows do."[33]

One may rightly question the educational value of the army's fly-by-night literacy-training experiment. Yet available evidence suggests that the army's eight-week crash course left a lasting impression on all those who experienced it. Instructors came away from the experience convinced of the educability of all citizens, regardless of race. "No great differences in learning ability between the two races were demonstrated," declared the *Journal of Negro Education.* But the best indicator of the success of the army's literacy program can be gleaned from the words of the participants. "I suge appreciate what you taught me down there, it is helpoing me in many ways," wrote a thankful recruit from Camp Blanding, Florida. A self-described "country boy" from Columbus, Ohio, had a similar experience: "When I went into the army I couldn't write . . . but as you see that I can write and by that you know that the school is Helping me." Another satisfied soldier wrote that his newfound literacy not only kept him from being prematurely discharged, it also gave him the confidence to "ask [his] wife for a divorce." A joyful parent of a recently inducted Grade V recruit contacted the executive officer of the Special Training Unit at Fort Benning, Georgia: "I thank you all for Learning My child how to read . . . I did not have time to send him to school . . . and I thank you."[34]

Few recruits who passed through Army Induction Centers during the war underwent literacy training. Introduced into basic training in June 1942, a mandatory orientation course was the usual embarkation point for the army's multilevel education program. The major aim of the program was to increase soldiers' "store of knowledge" as to why American troops were fighting in Europe and Asia. Understanding the reasons behind the conflict supposedly helped soldiers adjust more quickly to the constantly changing circum-

[33] Goldberg, *Army Training of Illiterates in World War II,* 150–69; Ginzberg, *Uneducated,* 69–71; Goldberg, *Army Training of Illiterates in World War II,* 194–95; Paul Witty, "What the War Has Taught Us about Adult Education," *Journal of Negro History,* 14 (Summer 1945), 293–98, esp. 295; *New York Times,* June 7, 1942, p. 38; *Meet Private Pete: A Soldier's Reader* (Washington, 1944). Paul Witty and Samuel Goldberg, "The Use of Visual Aids in Special Training Units in the Army," *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 35 (Feb. 1944), 82–90; Paul Witty, "Some Uses of Visual Aids in the Army," *Journal of Educational Sociology,* 18 (Dec. 1944), 241–49. For more on the Special Training Units, see Paula S. Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York, 1989), 115–55.

[34] Joseph Schiffman, "The Education of Negro Soldiers in World War II," *Journal of Negro Education,* 18 (Winter 1949), 23; Goldberg, *Army Training of Illiterates in World War II,* 269–73; Ginzberg, *Uneducated,* 133.

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stances of global war. Failure to provide adequate knowledge about the war was cited as a key explanation for the significant increase in soldier neuropsychiatric breakdowns that, according to one report, were running 60 percent higher than during World War I when, explained an army official, soldiers "fought from fixed positions, in trenches," and could get acclimated to their surroundings. "In this war," he continued, "our men are constantly on the offensive. They fight in the open. . . . they keep moving all the time. They must keep on fighting; only until they have won a campaign can there be a let-up." As the first phase of the IE Division's education agenda, the orientation program provided new soldiers with educational and political indoctrination that military leaders hoped would ease adjustment difficulties caused by the war's constantly shifting geopolitical landscape.[35]

The orientation program developed over a period of several years, at first employing only civilian speakers and films. Based on Research Branch findings, however, the army determined that the most successful course format employed a combination of film and lecture or film supplemented by an open question-and-answer session. After various configurations of the orientation course were tested in the field, the final iteration of the program was composed of five parts: introductory phase, consisting of seven orientation films; current phase, including war information tailored to the particular needs of individual regiments; film program, addressing strategic, economic, and social issues, anchored by the *Why We Fight* film series; newsmap, a map detailing the prosecution of the war effort; and lecture series, informational presentations delivered by military experts for purposes of group discussion. As part of the orientation program, which was taught in classrooms outfitted with chalkboards, desks, and textbooks, every soldier received an orientation course kit and participated in sessions led by full-time orientation and education officers trained at the army's School for Special Service at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia.[36]

Special Service officers matriculated from the army's officer and enlisted ranks. Training included 192 hours of course instruction in everything from "athletics and training" to "information and education" to "military training and tactics." The War Department's program of instruction for IE personnel recommended that all Special Service officers possess "a deep conviction of the cause for which we fight, and the importance of the role of individual" and "be college graduates with backgrounds of training and experience in such fields as teaching, educational administration, government, international relations, [and] law." In reality, most of the army's fifty-five hundred Special Service officers were college graduates with advanced degrees.[37]

Professional credentials mattered less in the field. Once deployed, officers used the *Guide to the Use of Information Materials,* the army's official orientation manual. According to the *Guide,* an officer's major objective was to provide soldiers with information on the progress of the war "fairly, dispassionately, and with full emphasis on its military significance to the armed forces of the U.S. and its allies." The primary function of the

[35] Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 131; *New York Times,* Nov. 28, 1943, p. E6.

[36] Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 131–33; *What the Soldier Thinks,* 4 (1944), 14–15; John MacCormac, "Our Troops Learn Why They Fight," *New York Times Magazine,* June 28, 1942, pp. 10, 23; "Army Orientation: To Make Men Think about Why They Fight Is Now an Official Army Task," *Fortune,* 29 (March 1944), 151–55, 166, 168, 171–72, 174, 176, 178; Frank Keppel, "Study of Information and Education Activities World War II," April 6, 1946, pp. 37–38, folder 1, Osborn Papers; Louis E. Keefer, "Little Hunks of Home: The School for Army Morale and Washington and Lee University, 1942–1946," *Virginia Cavalcade,* 43 (Summer 1993), 24–35.

[37] Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 46–59.

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officer, who performed the role of a news anchor, was to transmit "facts." The scripted replies to soldiers' questions were veiled in idealized democratic language that stressed core American principles such as equality, freedom, and individualism. When questioned about issues of race relations in the U.S. Army, for example, the orientation officer was instructed to reply that "problems of race are a proper concern . . . so far as they affect the efficiency of the Army, no more, no less." If the officer was pressed on the issue of America's Jim Crow army, the *Guide* instructed him to add: "To contribute by act or word toward the increase of misunderstanding, suspicion, and tension between people of different racial or national origin in this country or among our Allies is to help the enemy." On the military's pronounced wartime role in a society hostile to statist decision making, officers were encouraged to articulate the United States' tradition of small government and individual liberty by reminding soldiers that the "Army and Navy consider themselves the servants of the State and not its masters."[38]

While the *Guide* provided officers with canned responses, the military recognized that the mere presentation of facts in the absence of open discussion would not suffice for citizens used to robust and unmediated verbal exchange. When prepared responses failed to satisfy soldiers' questions, orientation officers were encouraged to move off script and to use the facts about the war "as a basis for the understanding of ideas." The *Guide*'s first section began with a discussion of truth and falsehood: "To speak of truth is not enough. . . . A truth need not only be well-rounded, but the utterance of it should take account of the stresses and objectives of the moment. Truth becomes falsehood unless it has the strength of perspective." A significant development in the instructional design of the orientation program was the army's acceptance that officers needed to engage recruits in open rather than closed discussion. As in classrooms in the civilian sphere, even seemingly incontrovertible information was open for debate and discussion between teachers and students.[39]

The use of education in the maintenance of soldiers' mental health continued after basic training. It was widely accepted that initial orientation programs were more effective when followed with educational instruction close to the battlefronts in overseas camps and bases. Launched in April 1942, the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) correspondence program was operated jointly by the University of Wisconsin and the military with the assistance of eighty-five colleges and universities and for-profit correspondence schools. Following the approval of their commanding officers, for a nominal fee of two dollars soldiers could choose from over seven hundred different courses offered in the USAFI course catalog, *What Would You Like to Learn?* Fields of study ranged from foreign languages to calculus, from shorthand to cost accounting, and from biology to American history. In electrical and mechanical fields, thirty-six courses were offered, while steam engineering, automobile and airplane maintenance and repair, plumbing, and steam fitting were a few of the trade courses provided. By every measure, the USAFI was one of the "largest educational endeavors ever undertaken in this country."[40]

[38] "Army Orientation," 172; *Guide to the Use of Information Materials* quoted in Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 134; MacCormac, "Our Troops Learn Why They Fight," 10.

[39] *Guide to the Use of Information Materials* quoted in Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 135; MacCormac, "Our Troops Learn Why They Fight," 10; *New York Times,* Nov. 6, 1942, p. 22.

[40] *New York Times,* Nov. 28, 1943, p. E7; *Catalog of the Armed Forces Institute: What Would You Like to Learn?* (Washington, 1944); "Soldiers Learn by Mail," *New York Times Magazine,* Nov. 8, 1942, p. 34.

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Correspondence study was a transportable method of instruction that accommodated the varied interests and aptitudes of the modern globe-trotting soldier. The USAFI provided two different types of correspondence courses at the high school and college levels. The first type was geared to soldiers in theaters of war with reliable postal service, where regular and rapid contact with instructors was possible. In these traditional correspondence courses, many of which were simply pulled from existing university offerings, soldiers worked closely with professors via the mail. Because many soldiers were located in theaters without efficient mail service, the USAFI educators also developed a second set of "self-teaching" courses that minimized the need for instructor contact.[41]

The USAFI's self-teaching courses permitted soldiers stationed in remote Accra, British West Africa, to set up their own student-run Army Training Center and design their own customized curriculum. At first, courses were offered in algebra, analytic and plane geometry, art, French, and German. Following the distribution of an educational survey, however, courses in college algebra, English, and Fanti (a West African dialect) were added to the curriculum. Soldiers taught many of the courses themselves in an unused officers' barrack, which housed two large classrooms, four small classrooms, a laboratory, several storerooms, and a music studio with a piano.[42]

Although the USAFI's academic offerings more than met the needs of the army's collegiate-grade soldiers, what most men wanted was hands-on vocational training. "What I desire," wrote one soldier to the USAFI registrar, "is a course of study on some practical vocation which will assist me to earn a living, in the event of future discharge from the U.S. armed forces." Other soldiers were less certain as to what they could or should study. "Any suggestions for study are sincerely appreciated," wrote a sailor aboard the *U.S.S. Dale.* "Because of the limited time on a wartime destroyer, the most of this opportunity must be made." It is not known if either of those servicemen was among the 1.25 million students to enroll with USAFI; if he did, he had to complete and pass fifteen increasingly difficult individual lessons before sitting for a USAFI subject examination. This graduated course format afforded even mediocre students the opportunity to advance and achieve. For students talented enough to complete the required battery of courses and exams, the award of vocational certification or high school or college credit was all but guaranteed.[43]

Yet the academic strengths of "Foxhole U" were routinely undermined by individual and administrative weaknesses. Especially in overseas theaters, shortages of texts and class materials, compounded by soldiers' fleeting interest, compromised the USAFI's efforts. First, not all soldiers were up to the task of fighting and learning. Adding a regional twist to the old dog-ate-my-homework excuse, an antiaircraft battery sergeant stationed in the Caribbean blamed his lack of academic progress on hungry "tropical insects": "[They] ate up all my papers," he wrote, "while I wasn't lookin' out." Second, the USAFI's admin-

[41] Glenn L. McConagha, "A Service School Looks at Its Program," *Journal of Higher Education,* 19 (Feb. 1948), 91.

[42] Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 104–5; U.S. Army, *History of the Army Education Branch: 1 July 1944–31 December 1944* (no. 1, Washington, 1944–1945), 8–10.

[43] Cpl. Laurence H. Slater to USAFI Registrar, April 17, 1943, exhibit O, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Advisory Committee for the United States Armed Forces Institute," June 26–27, 1943, box 49, entry 16, Records of Joint Army/Navy Boards & Committees, RG 225 (National Archives, College Park, Md.); T. F. Smith to USAFI Registrar, April 15, 1942, exhibit P, *ibid.*; McConagha, "Service School Looks at Its Program," 90. For USAFI enrollment data, see Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 96–97. On soldiers' USAFI academic credit options, see Amy D. Rose, "Preparing for Veterans: Higher Education and the Efforts to Accredit the Learning of World War II Servicemen and Women," *Adult Education Quarterly,* 42 (Fall 1990), 30–45.

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istrative reach often exceeded its grasp. Initially, program administrators circulated texts mainly in the continental United States. As the American war effort widened to a global scale, interest in correspondence study grew rapidly, posing the challenge of shipping texts internationally. To expedite course delivery, the USAFI organized distribution centers in all nine major theaters of war, which managed to keep most of the international locations stocked with texts and materials. Still, education officers complained that soldiers' demand continually outstripped supply. "I am still somewhat confused over the plan of distribution of correspondence courses," remarked an overwhelmed education officer stationed in Brisbane, Australia. "This week we are initiating a requisition for text material for certain courses which, our first six weeks of registration indicate, will be exhausted by the time this requisition can be filled."[44]

Despite significant setbacks, soldiers exhibited creativity in completing assignments. A soldier submitting his homework quipped: "Red ink has not been used on these reports as I do not have any available and the local fox hole does not carry it in stock." Other soldiers used tin can labels and scrap paper to write on. But the most severe obstacle facing soldier-students was enemy attack. "It's awful hard to get time to do the work," admitted a soldier stationed at the Anzio beachhead in Italy. "I get into my foxhole at night, and by pulling a blanket over it and using a bit of candle, I get some work done. But when Jerry comes over, bombing and strafing, I must say my mind's not on my lesson." Although soldiers' experiences with the USAFI varied widely, their interest in education was undeniable. Indeed, many soldiers shared the excitement of one fortunate G.I. safely stationed at Camp Cooke, California: "Yes, there is definitely something I would like to learn in the Army."[45]

As the end of war drew near, the army shifted gears to prepare soldiers for the readjustment to civilian life. Army officials speculated that after the war, soldiers would pass through "three psychological stages": celebration, letdown, and restoration. A War Department memo anticipated that symptoms would be especially acute among American prisoners of war, the majority of whom suffered from "significant psychological or attitudinal disturbances which make subsequent adjustment difficult." Experience demonstrated, however, that without an adequate substitute for combat, cases of desertion and soldier insubordination increased greatly, even among seemingly normal soldiers. Just as it had throughout the war, the army looked to education to ward off chronic soldier "letdown."[46]

The Army Education Program's (AEP) Post-Hostility Schools were organized to provide service personnel with educational opportunities throughout demobilization—the final phase of soldiers' military service prior to reentering civilian life. Army officials consid-

[44] Frederick C. Painton and Holman Harvey, "School Was Never like This," *American Legion Magazine,* 37 (Dec. 1944), 37; Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 86; Lt. Col. William R. Young to Col. Francis T. Spaulding, April 14, 1944, box 346, entry 285, Records of the Army Staff, RG 319 (National Archives, College Park, Md.). See Kenneth H. Bradt, *Why Service Personnel Fail to Complete USAFI Courses* (Washington, 1954).

[45] *New York Times,* Nov. 28, 1943, p. E7; Painton and Harvey, "School Was Never like This," 22, 34, 37; Sgt. Fred J. Bahler to USAFI Registrar, April 18, 1943, exhibit K, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Advisory Committee for the United States Armed Forces Institute," June 26–27, 1943, box 49, entry 16, Records of Joint Army/Navy Boards & Committees.

[46] "A Preliminary Study of Post-war Education for American Soldiers," Sept. 14, 1943, pp. 1–5, box 346, entry 285, Records of the Army Staff; Adjutant General to Commanding Generals, European Theater of Operations and Mediterranean Theater of Operations, "Medical Processing of Liberated American Prisoners of War in Europe," memo (by order of the secretary of war), April 6, 1945, box 315, *ibid.*

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Pfc. Virginia L. Glenn, stationed with the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion in Rouen, France, prepares for her French class at the Sorbonne, September 4, 1945. Pfc. Glenn was one of the thousands of American service personnel to enroll at a European university through the Army Information and Education Division Post-Hostility Education Program. *Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Visual Materials from the* NAACP *Records, LC-USZ62-132417.*

ered demobilization a critical juncture in the war effort. The Post-Hostility Schools were charged with providing all high school–educated soldiers an opportunity to enroll in courses that military leaders believed would boost soldier morale and prepare them for the inevitable emotional stresses of coming home. AEP administrators helped place several thousand specially qualified and ambitious soldiers in three-month courses at elite European institutions such as the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, and the Sorbonne. The overwhelming majority of the AEP's five hundred thousand participants, however, attended one of the IE Division's two thousand hastily organized but serviceable schools in England, France, Austria, and the Philippines. To ease this undertaking, the army produced 171 customized USAFI general education course curricula that covered everything from agricultural and technical to business fields. These courses were not intended to prepare the soldier solely for life as a worker but also, according to the IE Division, for life as a "citizen . . . with his own needs and interests." The program grew so quickly and was received so well that the IE Division Education Branch was forced to train an additional twenty-five thousand men as supervisors and instructors and to produce some 4 million textbooks covering 179 topics in less than six months.[47]

[47] Houle et al., *Armed Services and Adult Education,* 121–29; *New York Times,* July 26, 1945, p. 5; Gladwin Hill, "Greatest Education Project in History," *New York Times Magazine,* July 29, 1945, pp. 10–11; War Department, *G.I. Roundtable Series: Shall I Go Back to School?* (Washington, 1945), 5; *New York Times,* Aug. 2, 1945, p. 13.

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Two soldiers soak up some knowledge—and some sun—at the beach near the Biarritz Army University Center in Biarritz, France, c. 1945–1946. More than ten thousand American service personnel attended this university center while awaiting redeployment to the United States. In less than six weeks, the army converted unoccupied hotels and villas in the resort town into classrooms, laboratories, and dormitories. *Courtesy University of Texas Press.*

The apex of the AEP Post-Hostility School program was the organization of four Army University Centers at Shrivenham, England, and Biarritz, France, in the European theater; at Florence, Italy, in the Mediterranean theater; and at Oahu, Hawaii, in the Pacific theater. Where the army's other postwar schools relied on available USAFI courses and the initiative of individual soldiers, the administration of the Army University Centers involved the coordinated efforts of American higher education, the IE Division, and the War Department. One-half of the Army University Centers' faculty was pulled from the ranks of the standing army. The remaining faculty were civilian professors from American colleges and universities. These scholars were handpicked by Paul Packer, dean of education at Iowa State University, and transported to France, England, and Italy on the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Mary* ocean liners in the summer of 1945. Packer used *Who's Who in America* to select approximately three hundred professors, representing 174 academic institutions, to teach at the Army University Centers. Scholars populated seven academic divisions—agriculture, commerce, education, engineering, fine arts, journalism, and the liberal arts and sciences—and taught 412 different courses. The only admission requirement was a high school diploma, which allowed soldiers to matriculate from all branches of the army. From Potsdam, President Harry S. Truman wired a "hearty congratulations" to mark the opening of the Shrivenham Army University Center and predicted that "thousands of our American soldiers will take advantage of the splendid educational opportunities provided." Truman was right. According to army estimates, thirty-five thousand American service personnel and hundreds of their Allied counterparts attended the Army University Centers in 1945–1946, their sole year of operation.[48]

[48] John Dale Russell, "The Army University Centers in the European Theater," *Educational Record,* 27 (Jan. 1946), 5–23, esp. 11–18; *New York Times,* Aug. 2, 1945, p. 13. Estimated enrollment figures for the four Army

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American soldiers return to their quarters at the conclusion of ceremonies marking the opening of the Florence Army University Center, in Florence, Italy, on September 7, 1945. Significantly, this university center was both interracial and coeducational. The Army Information and Education Division operated four university centers—in the European, Mediterranean, and Pacific theaters—during demobilization. *Courtesy George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Virginia.*

For professors and G.I.'s, the experience seemed like a fitting end to a grueling war. Faculty at the Florence Army University Center claimed the students were the best they had ever taught. "The present students are more mature than the average college man," gushed one professor. "If I can get a student body like this one when I return to the States, life will be one long rest!" Faculty peppered courses with guest lecturers and day-trips to some of Italy's most storied locales. Classes in mineralogy and geology took trips to the Tyrolean Alps and Mount Vesuvius. The Florentine Observatory, where Galileo Galilei studied, was made available to students enrolled in the introductory astronomy class. The department of physical sciences made good use of the Institute of Geology and Paleontology and its world-renowned collection of fossils. Education students, meanwhile, visited the original Pestalozzi School, the seedbed of the modern American kindergarten movement. A library in excess of ten thousand volumes—augmented by the substantial English-language collections at the nearby University of Florence and the national library—was cobbled together to assist students in completing their assignments.[49]

The campus life of the Florence Army University Center differed little from that of any American college. For starters, military regulations were kept to a minimum. Neither saluting nor the wearing of army uniforms was required except during the two manda-

University Centers are available in U.S. Army, *History of the Army Education Program: 1 July 1945–31 December 1945* (no. 3, Washington, 1945–1947), 36–42. On the experiences of European soldiers, see Clarence R. Carpenter, "Evaluations of Biarritz American University," *Journal of Higher Education,* 18 (Feb. 1947), 63–70. On American veterans' experiences, see Bill Richardson, "On a GI Campus in England," *New York Times Magazine,* Oct. 21, 1945, pp. 21–23.

[49] Walter Crosby Eells, "How Mussolini Provided for a GI University," *Educational Record,* 27 (April 1946), 188, 185–86.

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tory military formations each week. Journalism students kept the university community informed with the publication of the *USCollegian,* the weekly campus newspaper. A student council was established to lobby the academic administration for better food and transportation alternatives, more sight-seeing tours and grading options. There was a Tuesday night lecture series featuring outstanding faculty and guest speakers. The Florence Symphony Orchestra—disbanded during the war and reconstituted by the head of the music department, Robert Lawrence, a graduate of the Juilliard School and former *New York Herald Tribune* music critic—performed several concerts for the university and greater Florentine community. A full slate of intramural sport competitions was held at a nearby outdoor swimming pool and athletic stadium, dubbed the "Spaghetti Bowl" by the university's students.[50]

In other ways the Florence Army University Center was far more socially progressive than most American colleges of the time. While the majority of soldier-students were white Christian males, Jewish, African American, and Japanese American students, along with over one hundred Women's Army Corps (WAC) members, also attended the institution. Indeed, the student council chairmanship was occupied by a Japanese American, Pvt. Isamu S. Aoki of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and an African American, Sgt. Harold Brown; the first student council secretary was a WAC, T. Sgt. Jennie Kraft; and at the closing ceremonies, the outstanding athletic leader award was given to a black student from Cincinnati, Ohio, Sgt. Willard Stargel, "amid prolonged applause." It may be too much to believe that the soldier-students at the Florence Army University Center exhibited "little or no evidence of racial prejudice," as one observer claimed; but it does seem likely that the university's experiment in interracial coeducation helped students learn "to respect each other." To be sure, rounding out their tour of duty at an army university was the chance of a lifetime for many G.I.'s. "The most wonderful thing has happened to me in the Army," recalled an alumnus of the Florence Army University Center, Sgt. Charles M. Northrup, of Pisgah, Iowa. Sgt. L. Laverty of the Air Corps wholeheartedly agreed: "The four weeks I spent was the best deal I ever had in the Army and all the other GIs attending the school thought so too."[51]

Psychological Fulfillment: The G.I. Bill and the Future of American Citizenship

The abrupt end to the war and the military's decision to demobilize the European and Mediterranean theaters of operation rapidly prevented the AEP from realizing its full potential as the transition point for soldiers' readjustment. For that, the American people, veterans, and government looked to the newly passed Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944—better known as the G.I. Bill of Rights.

With 2.5 million individuals discharged from military service for psychological deficiency, the state considered the eradication of soldier maladjustment a pressing national security matter. Questions about the stability of the economy and the emotional health of returning soldiers dogged policy makers and civilians alike. Wartime opinion polls highlighted widespread anxiety about the postwar economy: 70 percent of Americans ex-

[50] *Ibid.*, 182–83, 185.

[51] *Ibid.*, 185–88. Students at the other Army University Centers likewise enjoyed their experiences; see, for example, J. G. Umstattd, *Instructional Procedures at the College Level: An Analysis of Teaching at Biarritz American University* (Austin, 1947), 15–16.

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pected to be worse off after the war; 60 percent anticipated lower wages; and 75 percent expected fewer jobs. A January 1945 *Fortune* magazine poll showed that a majority of Americans expected another major economic depression to hit within a decade. *Fortune*'s sobering finding was confirmed by a cross-sectional IE Division Research Branch study that revealed that one-half of all soldiers believed the biggest challenge facing them after the war would be "the problem of earning a living." One soldier envisioned a future of "ditch digging and bread lines." Another soldier echoed that sentiment and forecast "another depression" and imagined "11 million apple salesmen" trying to eke out a postwar existence.[52]

In addition to earning a living, soldiers also worried about "making a mental readjustment to civilian life": 15 percent of the Research Branch's sample population believed that they would have "difficulty in settling down, getting over the restlessness, adjusting to a steady job, or getting over the mental effects of the war." One respondent thought he would have trouble "getting along with other people." Another soldier thought it was going to be difficult to "adjust . . . to the living customs of civilian life" and thought that it might be hard to get "familiar with the changes in the U.S. and my family and friends" since leaving for war. Many soldiers divulged more intimate concerns about the prospects of readjustment to civilian life: 10 percent of the men surveyed "expected to face marital, familial, or sexual problems of some sort" following their return home.[53]

Mental health experts and popular pundits exacerbated soldiers' private fears and contributed to the public's growing concern. In his 1944 best-selling tome on the returning soldier, *The Veteran Comes Back,* the Columbia University sociologist Willard Waller expected American soldiers to return home "bitter," "angry," and incapable of resuming life as self-sufficient and responsible adults. What is more, "not one community in ten," observed the psychologist Alanson H. Edgerton in his book *Readjustment or Revolution?*, "has anything approaching an adequately developed program of adjustment services." These experts predicted that lingering effects of warfare would disrupt the emotional reconnection of husbands and wives, fathers and children, possibly resulting in the spread of sexual "perversions," such as homosexuality and pedophilia.[54]

The scale and scope of the G.I. Bill sought to address all such readjustment concerns. In a departure from previous veterans' legislation that emphasized cash bonuses and survivors' pensions, the 1944 G.I. Bill awarded ex-soldiers comprehensive benefits covering their emotional, educational, and financial well-being. Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 22, 1944, the six-title omnibus bill contained provisions that covered counseling, disability, and unemployment, promised up to four years of college, and provided generous low-interest loans for financing homes, farms, and businesses. Approximately 7.8 million veterans, out of a population of 15.6 million, pursued education or training under the G.I. Bill; 2.2 million did so at the college or university level. Addition-

[52] Herman, *Romance of American Psychology,* 89; Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988), 67. On the lack of optimism about the postwar economy, see "Fortune Survey," *Fortune,* 31 (Jan. 1945), 260, 263–64, 267. "What Combat Soldiers Think the Biggest Problems Are That Will Be Facing Them after the War," June 20, 1945, pp. 1–3, Attitude Reports of Overseas Personnel, box 1014, entry 94, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

[53] "What Combat Soldiers Think the Biggest Problems Are That Will Be Facing Them after the War," pp. 1–3.

[54] Willard Waller, *The Veteran Comes Back* (New York, 1944), 100–101; Alanson H. Edgerton, *Readjustment or Revolution?* (New York, 1946), 8; May, *Homeward Bound,* 76.

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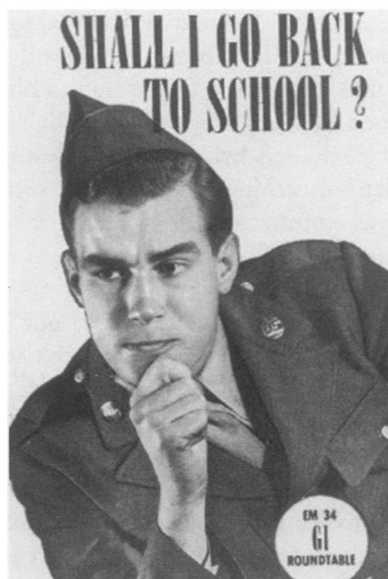

The Army Information and Education Division distributed informational pamphlets such as this one to help returning soldiers weigh their postwar employment and education options. Fears about the return of 16 million veterans to the tight postwar job market encouraged the state to promote the education and training benefits in the G.I. Bill of Rights as pathways to a psychologically healthy and economically prosperous civilian existence. *From War Department,* G.I. Roundtable Series: Shall I Go Back To School? *(Washington, 1945).*

ally, 5.4 million veterans made use of the $20 per week unemployment insurance, while 3.8 million took advantage of the home and business loan provision.[55]

Not all veterans fared the same under the legislation. A minimum of ninety days of continuous service and a discharge other than dishonorable qualified all service personnel. While those criteria automatically barred dishonorably discharged homosexual soldiers, nothing on paper made the unequal treatment of black and female veterans a foregone conclusion. But the G.I. Bill's decentralized administration, combined with the bold-faced discriminatory practices of local banks, schools, and Veterans Administration offices charged with disbursing benefits to individuals, ensured that white male veterans were better served by the legislation than were others.[56]

Nonetheless, the G.I. Bill transformed the ways all citizens thought about and related to the state and heightened the expectations each held for the other in the postwar period. That was especially true of higher education, which quickly emerged as one of the institutional embodiments of the G.I. Bill. With an estimated 1.5 million college-student school years lost to military service, and with the nation's enrollment stuck at one-half its prewar level, the veteran windfall on college campuses precipitated an unparalleled

[55] On previous veterans' legislation, see Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992); and Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses,* 6–33. On veterans' utilization of G.I. Bill benefits, see Olson, *G.I. Bill, the Veterans, and the Colleges,* 76; and Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses,* 124. For the final legislation, see Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (G.I. Bill of Rights), Pub. L. No. 78-346, 58 Stat. 284.

[56] On the white male heterosexual favoritism of the G.I. Bill, see, for example, Katznelson, "Public Policy and the Middle-Class Racial Divide after the Second World War," 170–72; Cohen, *Consumers' Republic,* 137–39; and Canaday, "Building a Straight State," 935–57.

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period of expansion in American higher education. Record numbers of veterans, many of whom would never have considered attending college previously, stormed the ivory tower. In 1947–1948 veterans totaled nearly 50 percent of college students nationwide, and by 1949 nearly 2.5 million Americans were in college—1 million more students than in any single year prior to World War II. Notably, African American veterans tapped the education and training provisions of the G.I. Bill at an aggressive rate. Legalized segregation denied most black veterans admission into the nation's elite, overwhelmingly white universities, and insufficient capacity at the all-black schools they could attend failed to match black veterans' demand. Yet the percentage of black students enrolled in American colleges more than tripled between 1940 and 1950, even in the face of staunch white resistance. Many African American veterans returned from the war convinced higher education was necessary for full democratic citizenship.[57]

State policy makers and officials agreed. The G.I. Bill whetted citizens' appetite for further education at the same time that it solidified the relationship between the state and higher education initiated during the war. First, the state made both active-duty education programming and the G.I. Bill permanent policy tools, though subsequent incarnations of the bill were less bountiful. But the reformulation of military service as an extension of civilian life—replete with material and educational entitlements for service personnel—endured and permanently changed the way the United States armed services marketed themselves to America's young men and women. If would-be recruits were not promised "the most wonderful thing," they were offered a chance to "be all they could be."[58]

Second, the state extended the promise of the G.I. Bill of Rights by helping elevate higher education as a right of democratic citizenship independent of military service. Policy statements crafted by the Truman administration played a pivotal role in this development. In 1947 the historic publication of *To Secure These Rights: The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights* made recognition of the right to education—including higher education—one of its core recommendations. Equal educational opportunity had long been a demand of civil rights activists, but their traditional focus had been on equalizing secondary rather than higher education. *To Secure These Rights* changed that. Only weeks after the release of the civil rights report, the President's Commission on Higher Education unveiled *Higher Education for American Democracy,* which offered a bold defense of higher education as important for the psychosocial development of the individual, for a more robust and informed public sphere, for international understanding, and for creative solutions to the nation's and the world's most vexing problems. The Truman Report, as it was often called, reaffirmed the call of the Committee on Civil Rights for an

[57] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Hearings on S. 1295 and S. 1509,* 78 Cong., 1 sess., Dec. 13, 1943, p. 40; Thomas D. Snyder, ed., *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait* (Washington, 1993), 76–77; Rivlin, *Role of the Federal Government in Financing Higher Education,* 64–70, esp. 67; Olson, *G.I. Bill, the Veterans, and the Colleges,* 74. Black students' share of the nation's total college enrollment jumped from 1.08% to 3.6% between 1940 and 1950; see Bennett, *When Dreams Came True,* 260.

[58] The G.I. Bill was altered and reauthorized during both the Korean War and the Vietnam War before being replaced in 1976 with the Post Vietnam Era Veterans Assistance Program and later the current All Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program—better known as the Montgomery G.I. Bill of 1984. See Olson, *G.I. Bill, the Veterans, and the Colleges,* 104–8. On the institutionalization of in-service army education programming after World War II, see Owen G. Birtwistle, Jordine Skoff Von Wantoch, and S. A. Witmer, "Extramural Education and Training of Military Personnel," in *The Changing World of Correspondence Study: International Readings,* ed. Ossian Mackenzie and Edward L. Christensen (University Park, 1971), 60–74.

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end to segregated colleges, universities, and professional schools. The report also endorsed a bevy of other federal initiatives, including a national program of scholarships and fellowships, direct financial support for campus building projects, a new cabinet-level Department of Education, greater support of adult education, and a doubling of the nation's higher education enrollment (to nearly 5 million) within the decade.[59]

The promises of the Truman report remained unfulfilled until the 1960s and 1970s. As the fruit of the first presidential commission on higher education since 1938, however, it captured the nation's imagination and provided a capacious ideological framework for the myriad federal-academic policies and programs that followed. Indeed, the expansion of the community college sector; the spread of university distance learning opportunities; the experimentation with educational television; the creation of international and area study institutes; support for and participation in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and the global trafficking of students, professors, and university expertise to and from the United States by way of Fulbright fellowships, the Educational Exchange Act (1948), the Occupied Areas Program, the Point Four program, the Mutual Security Program, and other broadly construed academic exchange programs capitalized on the Truman Report's animating idea: American higher education was democracy's proving ground.[60]

Third, the state's vigorous promotion of higher education as a right of democratic citizenship paved the way for the redefinition and expansion of the obligations associated with that citizenship. This was embodied in the reauthorization of the conscription activities of the Selective Service Administration in 1948. Fearful that a renewed draft would again deplete the nation's intellectual reserves, educational leaders and federal policy makers secured support for generous student deferments to ensure the continued growth and prosperity of the nation's higher education sector. By equating educational service and military service, policy makers converted collegiate study into a new weapon of the nation's defense arsenal. "If America is to have a chance of winning an all-out war with Russia," stated one policy maker, "it must plan on the most effective use of its brainpower, for in manpower it is greatly outnumbered." Not everyone agreed with this assessment, and throughout the Cold War student deferments remained as divisive as the continuation of the draft itself. Still, within a matter of years American higher education had become a stronghold of democracy, an arbiter of citizenship, and a key institution of the Cold War national security state.[61]

[59] Charles E. Wilson et al., *To Secure These Rights: The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights* (New York, 1947), 62–67; George F. Zook et al., *Higher Education for American Democracy: A Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education* (6 vols., New York, 1948), I, 1–46, V, 59–63.

[60] On the community college movement, see Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900–1985* (New York, 1995). On the growth of area and international studies programs, see Robert A. McCaughey, *International Studies and Academic Enterprise: A Chapter in the Enclosure of American Learning* (New York, 1984); and Bruce Cumings, "Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies during and after the Cold War," in *Universities and Empire,* ed. Simpson, 159–88. On the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), see Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, 1997). On federally sponsored student and professorial exchange programs during the Cold War, see Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938–1950* (New York, 1981), 113–67. For an overview of the new laws and programs, see Paul S. Bodenman, "Educational Cooperation with Foreign Countries," *Higher Education: Semimonthly Publication of the Federal Security Agency,* March 1, 1953, pp. 145–49.

[61] Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, 2000), 182. On the Cold War draft and deferment policies of the Selective Service Administration, see *ibid.*, 149–98; and Flynn, *Draft,* 88–165.

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By the early years of the Cold War, citizens and state policy makers agreed, albeit for different reasons, that education created prosperous, politically astute, and psychologically adjusted citizens. For the state, education produced the citizens it most wanted to have; for soldiers and veterans, education provided a gateway to full citizenship and its attendant benefits. World War II placed higher education at the center of American citizenship.

It did so, however, in ways that students of the federal-academic research matrix have ignored. The birth of sponsored research radically changed the day-to-day operation and long-range aspirations of American higher education. The on-demand production of vital scientific knowledge—epitomized by the building of the atomic bomb—convinced policy makers and the wider public of the research university's fundamental utility in the economic development and defense of the United States. But the university's capacity to synthesize citizens capable of coping with the interrelated political, economic, and psychological demands of Cold War citizenship also resonated deeply with key opinion leaders and millions of Americans. Even when policy makers denounced universities for the alleged production of maladjusted citizen-students during the 1950s red scare and the 1960s student revolts, they attacked the political and social permissiveness of higher learning without seriously questioning the necessity of educating citizens. By the end of World War II the state had already answered this question in the affirmative.

Yet the mere crafting of state education policy before and after the G.I. Bill did not inevitably lead to the twin revolutions in American higher education and democratic citizenship documented here. Elite policy makers may have brought the state and higher education into close contact, but it took common citizens in uncommon times to consummate the relationship and to ensure that education would never drift too far from the center of American politics or society again.

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