

Corey Harrison

Citino, R. M. "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction." *American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1070-90.

Robert Citino sets the stage for his article, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," published in 2007, by explaining that military history is in a "curious position," and while it is popular with the masses it is not widely praised in academic circles (1070). Citino feels that the prejudice is an issue worth addressing, and states "No military historian should be pleased with the situation" (1070). He then qualifies the previous statement by explaining, while he feels this is an important issue, it is not worth obsessing over. Citino's article is a response to a hostile academic climate of historians, but through his use of analysis and expertly chosen sources he is able to construct a stalwart defense for military history and its value. He lays out that military history is divided into three main schools: new military history, operational military history, and one that focuses on culture and memory.

New military history works by "moving the field beyond narrow battlefield analysis in order to concentrate on the interface between war and society" (1071). Operational military history focuses now on "the uncertainty of the battlefield (often meta phorized, per Carl Maria von Clausewitz, as the "fog of war"), the ever-present problems of information-gathering and -sharing, and the inherently asymmetric nature of war (1079). Lastly, Robert Citino lays out the third as a "new emphasis on culture, especially the history of memory" (1082). He is explaining each school of thought so other history academics that are skeptical or inexperienced with the subject of military history might better understand the subjects he references in his article.

Citino uses a variety of scholarly sources, consisting of books and articles written by experts in military history, to support his claim that this form of history is more robust and relevant than ever. He also uses sources that he can use to argue and show the importance of military history on world history. He analyzes the work of Reed Browning, the author of several

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journal articles, and the book, *The War of the Austrian Succession*. Citino writes that even though Browning is considered a new military historian, “he departs sufficiently from the template of the new military history to stress the importance of strategic, operational, and even tactical detail.” Citino uses the previous example to not only show connections between the military histories, but also explains its importance in relation to world history as a way in which to draw his skeptical colleagues. “It would seem strange indeed if a scholarly field with such broad interests did not make room for analysis of war and battle...” (1081). Showing the connections between the three schools of thought and world history is important for Citino to prove their relevance to a skeptical audience of historians. Those academics that do not see the value in military history and feel there are other subjects more worthy of research. Schools of thought are not the only things that evolved with time. Citino also explains examples of changes in historiography and how they affect military history.

Citino uses examples of changes in historiography to illustrate the evolution of perspectives on military history. When discussing the changing historiography of the Civil War, Robert Citino states, “Historians of race, of gender, and of civilian life in the conquered and occupied South have moved discussion of the war well beyond the battlefield controversies that once held sway” (1072). Citino goes on to explain how the change in historiography has broadened the general view of the American Civil War in ways never before explored. He is working tirelessly to make the case to social, cultural, and various other historians. He communicates that learning the how, why, and who fought in wars across the world is just as valuable a window into the past as any other discipline. Citino’s efforts, while not contributing much in the way of new information on the subject, contributes a new perspective and a strong argument in the defense of military history.

I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work. I received authorized assistance in the form of the writing center.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'W' and 'H'.

