

Biographical Paragraph

Dr. Robert “Bob” Wettemann, Jr. is an Associate Professor of History at the United States Air Force Academy. He holds a B.A. with Honors in History from Oklahoma State University, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in History from Texas A&M University. He is the author of *Privilege vs. Equality: Civil Military Relations in the Jacksonian Era, 1815-1845* and numerous articles and book chapters on U.S., military, and public history. He has taught at McMurry University in Abilene, Texas, contributed to the Command Historian’s Office of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Liberty, North Carolina, and served as Director of the U.S. Air Force Academy Center for Oral History. He recently enjoyed a sabbatical as Historian-in-Residence at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, conducting a review of their historical programming and consulting with the National Scouting Museum. His book, *Rhino Tanks and Sticky Bombs: GI Ingenuity in World War Two*, explores the junction of innovation and technology among GIs in the Second World War, and is forthcoming June 2025. He has been a member of the Society for Military History since 1999 and has missed only four meetings (including COVID) during that entire period. In addition to serving as a member of the Mancado Prize Committee from 2014 to 2017, he has organized and appeared on numerous SMH panels, including a series featuring the scholarly work of cadets from the United States’ Military, Naval, and Air Force Academies.

Candidacy Statement

I attended my first meeting of the Society for Military History in 1999, while still a young graduate student at Texas A&M University, presenting in a session that included my advisor, Chip Dawson, and the inimitable Jerry Cooper. When Pete Maslowski asked me a

question about my paper, I felt as if I had arrived as an historian, having known his work since I had read *For the Common Defense*, which he had co-authored with Allan Millett, when I took my first college military history course. As I reflect upon twenty-five years' association with the society, I have reached a long-overdue point in my career when it is time to give more back to an organization that has meant so much to me both personally and professionally. The SMH Annual Meeting is truly a highlight of my academic year, and it is my sincere desire to continue to advance the organization and its mission as a member of the Board of Trustees. To these ends, I believe that the mission of the Society for Military History should be to provide a truly inclusive and open forum for the scholarly and professional study, advancement, and exchange of military history in its broadest definitions and terms, as well as provide a positive and encouraging environment for young military historians to meet future friends, colleagues, and mentors.

Robert P. Wettemann, Jr.

Associate Professor
Department of History, United States Air Force Academy
2354 Fairchild Dr. Suite 6F-101
USAF Academy, CO 80840
robert.wettemann@afacademy.af.edu

Education:

Ph.D. – History -- Texas A&M University -- May 2001
Master of Arts -- History -- Texas A&M University -- December 1995
Bachelor of Arts with Honors -- History -- Oklahoma State University -- May 1993

Academic Appointments:

Associate Professor, USAF Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – January 2019 to present

Assistant Professor, USAF Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – June 2016 to January 2019

Max F. James Distinguished Researcher in Character and Leadership Development, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – December 2014 to June 2016

Director, USAFA Center for Oral History, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – June 2010 to December 2014

Historian, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, NC – October 2009 to May 2010

Visiting Professor of History, USAF Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – August 2007-July 2009

Associate Professor of History, McMurry University, Abilene, TX – March 2007 to August 2009

Director, Public History Program, McMurry University, Abilene, TX – March 2002 to July 2007

Assistant Professor of History, McMurry University, Abilene, TX – August 2001 to March 2007

Major Scholarship:

Published Works:

Rhino Tanks and Sticky Bombs: GI Ingenuity in World War II (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2025).

“The Military Professional and Society” Section editor for Mark Grotelueschen, Ed., *The Harmon Memorial Lectures in Military History, 1988-2017* (Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, AL: Air University Press, 2020), including essays by:

Victor Davis Hanson
Dave R. Palmer
Shannon E. French
Richard H. Kohn
Andrew Bacevich
Brian McAlister Linn

Privilege vs. Equality: Civil Military Relations in the Jacksonian Era, 1815-1845 (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009)

Donald S. Frazier, Robert F. Pace, and Robert P. Wettemann, Jr., *The Texas You Expect: The Story of Buffalo Gap Historic Village* (Abilene, TX: Statehouse Press 2006)

Chapters, Articles and Other Publications:

“The 4th Tank Battalion in the Pacific: A Case Study in Field-Inspired Ingenuity,” *Marine Corps History* 9 (Summer 2023), 16-30.

“Gideon Pillow,” chapter in *Worst Generals in History*, John Jennings and Charles Steele, eds., (London: Reaktion Publishers, 2021).

“War of 1812,” and “Mexican War,” chapters in *Daily Life of U.S. Soldiers*, Paul Springer and Christopher Mortenson, eds., (Westport, CT: ABC-CLIO Publishers, 2019).

“American Weaponry in the Battle of New Orleans,” in *The Battle of New Orleans Reconsidered*, Curtis Manning, ed., (New Orleans: Louisiana Institute of Higher Education, 2014), 186-204.

“From the Factory to the Front: The Twelfth Armored Division’s Harvester Battalion,” *On Point: Journal of Army History*, 14 (Spring 2009): 6-13.

“A Part or Apart: The Alleged Isolation of Antebellum U.S. Army Officers,” *American Nineteenth Century History*, 7 (June 2006): 193-217.

Peter Karsten, ed., *Encyclopedia of War and American Society* (New York: MTM Publishing, 2006), contributor.

“West Point, the Jacksonians and the Army’s Controversial Role in National Improvements,” in Lance Betros, ed., *West Point: Two Centuries and Beyond* (Abilene, TX: McWhiney Foundation Press, October 2004), 144-166.

“A Virginia Soldier in the Frontier Army: The Letters of Sergeant John R. Whaley, Second U.S. Artillery, 1854-1859.” *Military History of the West* 29 (Spring 1999): 63-88.

“The Girl I Left Behind Me: United States Army Laundresses and the Mexican War,” *Army History*, 46 (Spring 1999): 1-10.

Presentations and Invited Symposia:

“The Future of History at Philmont,” invited presentation for the Philmont Staff Association, 29 and 29 July 2024.

“The American Understands Machinery: U.S. Ingenuity in the Pacific, 1941-45, paper presentation for the Society for Military History, Arlington, Virginia, 21 April 2024.

“Marine Tanks on the Islands: Ingenuity and Innovation in Marine Tank Battalions in the Pacific,” paper presentation at the Society for Military History, Fort Worth, Texas, 29 April 2022.

Commentator for “Young Scholars Panel: Military History at the Service Academies: Three Cadet Perspectives,” panel presentation at the Society for Military History, Louisville, Kentucky, 7 April 2018.

“Mark Twains and Parafraags: Air Corps Ingenuity in World War II,” invited lecture at the Wings over the Rockies Museum Distinguished Lecture Series, 9 March 2016.

“Sweeping the Center into Eternity: Naval Artillery at the Battle of New Orleans, 1815,” paper presented at the 2015 McMullen Naval History Symposium, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD, 17 September 2015.

“Racism, Machineguns, and Speaking Truth to Power: Major Malcolm Wheeler Nicholson’s Career-Ending Machinegun Demonstration,” paper presented at the Society for Military History Annual Meeting, Montgomery, Alabama, 20 April 2015.

“New Orleans, 1815: The Battle that Really Mattered,” invited lecture at the 3rd Annual Battle of New Orleans Symposium, Nunez Community College, Chalmette, Louisiana, 8 January 2015.

“The Billy Mitchell of the Cavalry: The Conflicted Career of Major Malcolm Wheeler Nicholson,” paper presented at Society for Military History, Kansas City, Missouri, 6 April 2014.

Professional Service:

Historian-in-Residence, Philmont Scout Ranch, Fall 2024 (Sabbatical appointment)
Member, Philmont Historic Preservation Task Force, Philmont Scout Ranch, 2021 to present
Member, National Scouting Museum Task Force, Boy Scouts of America, 2016 to present
Member, Emerging Crisis Oral History Research Fund Committee, Oral History Association, 2014 to 2016
Member, Mancado Prize Committee, Society for Military History, 2014 to 2017
Member, Program Committee, Rocky Mountain Military Affairs Society, 2014 to present
Editorial Reviewer, University of Oklahoma Press, 2014 to present
Member, Oklahoma State University Honors College Alumni Board, 2006 to 2011
President, Texas Forts Trail Board of Directors, 2006-2007
Member, Texas Forts Trail Board of Directors, 2002-2007

Awards and Honors:

Daughters of the American Revolution Community Service Award, Zebulon Pike Chapter, 2024.
Department of the Air Force Award for Civilian Achievement, Department of History, USAF Academy, 2023.
Heidler Award for Teaching Excellence in American History, Department of History, USAF Academy, 2021
Outstanding Academy Educator, Department of History, USAF Academy, 2018
Stephen L. Orrison Award for Mentoring Excellence, USAFA Department of History, 2016
Clio Award for Outstanding Contributions to the USAFA Department of History, 2012
St. George Episcopal Award, Pikes Peak Council, Boy Scouts of America, 2012
McMurry University Graduates’ Faculty Appreciation Award, 2004