

*A War Story: World War II, Memory, and Experience.*

Jaedin Johnson

A special thanks to Dr. Sam Redman, Dr. Brian Bunk, and Dr. Daniel Gordon.

Abstract: This paper explores World War II and American collective memory in the video game Call of Duty: World at War, (Activision 2008) and how it influences public understanding of the conflict. Drawing on oral histories as well as historical scholarship, the paper analyzes game missions in an effort to discover World at War's historical fidelity. The findings reveal that many of the game's missions remain faithful real world locations and dates. While the game encourages historical empathy and moral reflection, its portrayal omits key racial and ethical complexities, particularly in the Pacific theater. This omission reinforces narratives of American exceptionalism when compared to the game's depiction of the Eastern Front. Nevertheless, World at War offers a unique digital space where players can engage with the trauma and memory of World War II, highlighting the potential and limits of gaming as a medium for historical representation.

Major Department: History, Anthropology

## WWII as Media

*“We can never hope to understand the nature of World War Two in Asia, or international and interracial conflict in general, if we fail to work constantly at correcting and re-creating the historical memory.”*

— Dover, John, W.

“Flamethrower!” With no response, Pvt. Graves stepped closer to the hole. Suddenly, the Japanese soldier appeared in front of him. The soldier “had a plume hat, [...] a beautiful sword and a beautiful uniform on, and he stood there with his hand on his sword” and his other arm draped across his chest. Pvt. Graves repeated his phrases to the soldier, to which the soldier responded in Japanese. Suddenly thereafter the Japanese soldier “blew himself to Pieces.”<sup>1</sup>

Since the 1950s, World War II films have played a pivotal role in shaping American collective memory.<sup>2</sup> In recent decades, that interaction has expanded into video games. Video games began to draw on World War II as a setting starting in the early 1980s, with titles like *Castle Wolfenstein* (Muse Software 1981) and *1942* (Capcom 1984) achieving widespread popularity across multiple platforms. By the early 1990s, games like *Wolfenstein 3D* (id Software, 1992) and *Doom* (id Software, 1993) helped establish the foundation for what would later become the first person shooter (FPS) genre. Initially referred to as “Doom clones,” these games began to gain traction, setting the stage for the genre's rise to prominence in the late 1990s.

---

<sup>1</sup> Black Rifle Coffee Company, “BRCC Presents - Don Graves at Iwo Jima,” February 19, 2024,

<sup>2</sup> Godfrey, Richard, and Simon Lilley. 2009. “Visual Consumption, Collective Memory and the Representation of War.” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 12 (4): 275–300. doi:10.1080/10253860903204428.

Often inspired by the films that preceded them, one film carried particular significance within both the film industry and the FPS genre: *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). Steven Spielberg's war epic was released in 1998 to widespread acclaim. Immediately, the public had a visceral reaction, as *Saving Private Ryan* became the second highest-grossing movie of the year. It was not just general audiences that engaged deeply with the film, but veterans as well. Major Dick Winters, who earned the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions on D-Day, "sent notices to more than 100 of his friends, urging them to see the film." The depiction of combat made Winters "feel that now, finally, non-veterans can begin to understand." He wasn't alone in his response either, as "the Department of Veterans Affairs [had] increased staffing on its toll-free counseling line to accommodate vets shaken by the film."<sup>3</sup>

*Saving Private Ryan* had deviated from previous war films in its portrayal of WWII by focusing on an intense, realistic depiction of combat. It captured the public imagination, but has also been critiqued for its characterization of the war and its soldiers. Professor at Gonzaga University, Dr. Patrick T. McCormick has criticized *Saving Private Ryan* and similar films for adopting "a warrior's code."<sup>4</sup> According to McCormick, the "warrior's code" represents a narrative where questions pertaining to the justification of a war are disregarded, and soldiers' brotherly loyalty and camaraderie are emphasized. Previous films, modeled along the "just war theory" required participants to have a just cause, authority, and the right intent. McCormick believes this "warrior's code" ethos to be harmful, and the media that adopts it to be "prowar propaganda."<sup>5</sup> The argument is that media such as *Saving Private Ryan* undermines public discourse surrounding

---

<sup>3</sup> Wallace, Amy, "'Ryan' Ends Vets' Years of Silence" *Los Angeles Times*, August 6, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> McCormick, Patrick T. "Saving 'Citizen' Ryan: Supporting a Just War or Just Supporting the Troops?" *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Spring / Summer 2009, Vol. 29, No.1, pp. 109-126

<sup>5</sup> McCormick, Patrick T. "Saving 'Citizen' Ryan: Supporting a Just War or Just Supporting the Troops?" *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Spring / Summer 2009, Vol. 29, No.1, pp. 109-126

war, prompting the dismissal of questions pertaining to the ethical and political motivations behind military interventions, instead, solely promoting sentiments of “support the troops.”<sup>6</sup>

Dr. John Bodnar, Professor of History at Indiana University would agree. Bodnar argues that while *Saving Private Ryan* presents a harrowing depiction of combat, it ultimately serves to “reinforce our admiration for these soldiers and their gallantry.”<sup>7</sup> Bodnar suggests the film promotes American exceptionalism by portraying American soldiers as heroes that begrudgingly undergo a necessary evil. The film demonstrates that “the war was savage; the average American GI who fought it was not.”<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the video game *Call of Duty: World at War* (Activision 2008) may suffer from the same criticisms. The game, much like *Saving Private Ryan*, focuses on the camaraderie between soldiers, and the harrowing experience of combat, all of which could be seen as perpetuating the same ethos that McCormick and Bodnar argue is problematic. The “warrior’s code” McCormick criticizes has been widely adopted in the FPS genre, and is particularly prominent in World War II-themed games.

This trend can be traced back to *Medal of Honor*, (Electronic Arts 1999) which was directly inspired by *Saving Private Ryan*. Amidst the film's development, director Steven Spielberg saw potential for an interactive WWII experience, and in 1997, he commissioned DreamWorks Interactive to create it. Spielberg sought to imbue the game with the same tonal qualities as *Saving Private Ryan*; hiring the same military advisor, Marine Captain Dale Dye.<sup>9</sup> *Medal of Honor* became a critical success upon release in 1999, but it was the third entry in the series, *Medal of*

---

<sup>6</sup> McCormick, Patrick T. "Saving 'Citizen' Ryan: Supporting a Just War or Just Supporting the Troops?" *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Spring / Summer 2009, Vol. 29, No.1, pp. 109-126

<sup>7</sup> Bodnar, John. "Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America." *The American Historical Review*, Jun., 2001, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp.805-817

<sup>8</sup> Bodnar, John. "Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America." *The American Historical Review*, Jun., 2001, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp. 805-817

<sup>9</sup> Edge Staff. "The Making of Medal of Honor." *GamesRadar*, March 30, 2015; Campbell, Colin, "How Steven Spielberg Inspired Today's Top Shooters." *IGN*, May 29, 2012.; Peel, Jeremy, "How the War Began: The Making of Call of Duty." *GamesRadar*, Feb 3, 2024.

*Honor: Allied Assault* (Electronic Arts 2002) that proved even more successful than its predecessors, further popularizing the World War II FPS genre.<sup>10</sup> After *Allied Assault*'s release, several of the developers left and founded their own studio: Infinity Ward. All twenty-two original team members at Infinity Ward had worked together on *Allied Assault*, and they brought their expertise to their new project: *Call of Duty*. In this way, the *Call of Duty* series can be seen as a continuation of the same ethos that began with *Saving Private Ryan* and evolved through the *Medal of Honor* series.

As the FPS genre evolved, World War II became a central theme. It is the setting where major franchises such as *Medal of Honor* and *Call of Duty* gained widespread popularity and critical acclaim: with *Call of Duty* having sold over 425 million units and earned over \$30 billion in revenue.<sup>11</sup> There are more than sixty World War II FPS games, ten belonging to the *Call of Duty* series alone. These games undoubtedly impact the ways in which the public interacts, and remembers the Second World War; however, the value of their historical representations varies drastically. *Call of Duty: World at War* presents a unique and valuable portrayal of the conflict by emphasizing brutality and the emotional weight of war. *World at War* further challenges conventional FPS narratives of heroism by offering players a sobering reflection on the human cost of conflict, while cultivating historic empathy for those who fought.

### **Call of Duty: World at War**

---

<sup>10</sup> Savage, Phil. "Reappraising Medal of Honor: Allied Assault, one of our highest-scoring shooters ever" *PCGAMER*, July 4, 2017

<sup>11</sup> Hume, Mike, "The future of Call of Duty and 'Warzone'" *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2022.

A majority of World War II video games highlight American involvement and focus predominantly on the Western Front.<sup>12</sup> Developed by Treyarch in 2008, *Call of Duty: World at War* sets itself apart by featuring two distinct campaigns, highlighting both the U.S. war against Japan in the Pacific, and the Soviet war against the Nazis along the Eastern Front. The inclusion of these perspectives is notable, as they are often underrepresented in U.S. media portrayals of WWII, which tend to emphasize U.S. efforts in Europe.<sup>13</sup>

In *World at War*, the primary player agent is a fictional World War II combatant. Players begin with the American campaign in the Pacific Theater, inhabiting the role of Private First-Class C. Miller, with the 1st Marine Division. From harrowing encounters during the Raid on Makin Island, to the intense Battle of Peleliu, the narrative provides a visceral look at the challenges faced by American Marines. Interspersed between Marine raids are Soviet struggles on the Eastern front, where the player becomes Pvt. Dimitri Petrenko, a soldier in the 150th Rifle Division of the 3rd Shock Army. Starting with the grueling Battle of Stalingrad, the narrative follows Red Army soldiers as they defend their homeland from the German invasion, culminating in the Soviet invasion of Germany and the climactic Battle of Berlin. This inclusion highlights the Soviet Union's critical role in the defeat of Nazi Germany, challenging the often U.S.-centric narrative of World War II in American memory.

The game begins by introducing players to the geopolitical landscape relevant to the Eastern and Pacific theaters, using a combination of a 3D globular map and archival footage. The player hears iconic sounds of German soldiers marching and shouting “Sieg Heil” as a red swastika

---

<sup>12</sup> See: Medal of Honor (1999), Call of Duty (2003), Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30 (2005), Medal of Honor: Allied Assault (2002), Call of Duty 2 (2005), Battlefield 1942 (2002), Call of Duty: WWII (2017), Company of Heroes (2006), Medal of Honor: Frontline (2002), Sniper Elite series (2005-present).

<sup>13</sup> Roediger HL 3rd, Zerr CL. Who won World War II? Conflicting narratives among the allies. Prog Brain Res. 2022;274(1):129-147. doi: 10.1016/bs.pbr.2022.06.003. Epub 2022 Jul 25. PMID: 36167446.

spreads over Germany before enveloping large swaths of Europe, Norway, North Africa, and parts of the Soviet Union. The globe then rotates, highlighting Japanese advances into Korea and Manchuria (see fig. 1). Archival video footage of the Imperial Japanese military plays, showcasing soldiers, naval and aviation units, and Emperor Hirohito alongside executions. Text reads “1937 Indochina” before swiftly transitioning to images of Capitol Hill and President Roosevelt. Audio of President Roosevelt's “Day of Infamy” speech plays as text reads, “US demands withdrawal of Japanese troops from Indochina;” “US signs oil embargo to cut supply to Japan;” “Japan loses 90% of oil supply due to embargo.”<sup>14</sup> Roosevelt's speech continues to play as the game transitions to 3D models of Japanese planes attacking Pearl Harbor. Paired with real archival footage of the attack, the montage continues to showcase the increased US war effort, with archival footage highlighting factory workers, including women assembling aircraft. Graphical images and 3d models display increased military manufacturing production level, culminating with footage of civilian men enlisting in recruitment offices, before seamlessly transitioning into a 3D model of the player agent being equipped for combat. Within 80 seconds, *World at War* established the critical context of U.S. involvement in World War II. By ending the game introduction showcasing civilian enlistment and equipping the player agent, the game intersects with the social memory concept of the citizen soldier. This introduction reflects the larger gameplay experience where “the citizen soldier [...] is replaced by the civilian gamer who gains specific firsthand experience of a simulation of World War II.”<sup>15</sup>

The integration of period specific footage allows *World at War* to transcend typical gameplay experiences by grounding the game with real world imagery. Not only does this footage

---

<sup>14</sup> *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Ramsay, Debra. "Brutal Games: 'Call of Duty' and the Cultural Narrative of World War II." *Cinema Journal*, Winter 2015, Vol. 54, No. 2

promote historical resonance within players, but it also presents an opportunity to learn about historical events that the game is based on. This use of archival footage lends the game a sense of credibility and historical gravitas, which can enhance the player's emotional connection to the gameworld. Furthermore, throughout both campaigns, the player interacts with game environments designed to represent real-world locations and battle-specific objectives, placing players in historically grounded combat scenarios.

The first mission, "Semper Fi," is on August 17, 1942, during a Marine raid on Makin Atoll, of the Gilbert Islands. This mission imitates the real-life raid that took place on the same date, although it includes a fictional prisoner rescue. The battle for Peleliu then takes center stage in the missions "Little Resistance," "Hard Landing," "Burn 'em Out," and "Relentless," which occur between September 15-16, 1944. These missions cover the U.S. Marines' campaign to secure the island, from the landing on White Beach to the fight for Peleliu Airfield and, finally, the brutal assault on The Point. Notably, the timeline and objectives are historically accurate.<sup>16</sup>

In the cutscene introducing "Little Resistance," the narrator provides context on the First Marine Division, nicknamed The Old Breed. He reflects on the age of the soldiers, remarking, "old... we're not even out of our twenties."<sup>17</sup> This accurately reflects that by the time of the Peleliu invasion, "80 percent of the Division was aged between 18 and 25."<sup>18</sup> The cutscene also recounts previous Marine engagements, highlighting Operation Watchtower and the invasion of Guadalcanal on August 7, 1942, and Operation Cherryblossom with the invasion of Bougainville on November 1, 1943. Finally, the cutscene introduces Operation Stalemate, the invasion of Peleliu on September 15, 1944. Every codename used was the actual codename for each respective

---

<sup>16</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> *Call of Duty: World at War*. "Little Resistance" Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg. 30

operation. Furthermore, the cutscene introduction for “Burn ‘em Out” accurately reports 1st Marine Division casualties, although the timeline is off by 2 days.<sup>19</sup> The “Relentless” cutscene offers crucial context about the intense heat of the Peleliu environment, showcasing the sweltering 115-degree temperatures that led many soldiers to suffer from heat exhaustion. However, this critical detail is entirely absent from the gameplay experience. By neglecting to incorporate these environmental hardships into the mechanics or pacing of the mission, the game misses an opportunity to enhance its authenticity and immerse players in the full spectrum of challenges faced by Marines. The cutscene also informs players of one hundred fifty-seven American casualties from the 3rd Battalion that occurred while taking The Point; and while the game doesn't specify, this particular number corresponds to the losses faced by Company K.<sup>20</sup>

During these missions set amidst the battle for Peleliu, the game authentically recreates Japanese defensive structures, including pillboxes and fortified bunkers, which were commonly semi-submerged and connected by complex trench and tunnel systems. These formidable structures allowed Japanese soldiers to launch surprise counterattacks and maintain strong defensive positions.<sup>21</sup> This reflects the original Japanese defense of Peleliu, which is remembered as “one of the bloodiest battles in US Marine Corps history.”<sup>22</sup>

During “Hard Landing,” the player agent and his squad of Marines are pinned down due to Japanese machine gun fire emanating from a pillbox. The player agent must pick up an M2-flamethrower, and use it to burn the non-player-characters in the pillbox. As described by Pvt. Graves, the M2-Flamethrower had very little fuel, and “If you held the trigger back, in 15 seconds you’re empty.” The minimal amount of fuel meant that “you [had] six to seven bursts” before

---

<sup>19</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg. 62

<sup>20</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg. 51

<sup>21</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg. 49

<sup>22</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg. 13

running out.<sup>23</sup> In the game, the M2 has unlimited fuel, but can only spray fire for a short time before overheating. This mechanic forces the player to use the weapon in bursts, just as described by Pvt. Graves. Furthermore, the missions set on Peleliu encourage the use of smoke grenades and rifle propelled grenades, which reflects the real historical strategy employed by Lieutenant William L. Willis while assaulting The Point.<sup>24</sup>

The narrative follows the 1st Marine Division to Okinawa, where the missions "Blowtorch & Corkscrew" and "Breaking Point" shift focus to closing battles of the Pacific theater. "Blowtorch & Corkscrew" takes place at Wana Ridge on May 14, 1945, while "Breaking Point" takes players to Shuri Castle on May 29, 1945, capturing the final moments of the Okinawa campaign. The introductory cutscenes for "Blowtorch & Corkscrew" focus on the rain and mud that made the campaign miserable. While April was mostly clear skies, May saw a torrential downpour that lasted for almost the entire month.<sup>25</sup> As such, the entire mission features rain as an integral part of the visual experience. However, environmental effects have no tangible impact on gameplay. Again, the developers engage with significant aspects of the soldiers' experience, such as the rain and mud or the extreme heat of Peleliu, but fail to explore these elements within the mechanics of the game. This omission limits the authenticity of representing the full scope of hardships faced by Marines during the campaign.

On the Eastern Front, *World at War* introduces players to the Soviet perspective, providing a rare focus on the Red Army's struggle against Nazi Germany. The Soviet campaign begins with "Vendetta," which takes place during the Battle of Stalingrad on September 17, 1942. Throughout the mission, the player agent uses a scoped Mosin Nagant rifle to dispatch enemy targets. This

---

<sup>23</sup> Graves, Don. Interview by Shawn Ryan. *The Shawn Ryan Show*. Podcast.

<sup>24</sup> Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell* Greenwood, 2004. Pg 51

<sup>25</sup> Sloan, Bill. *The Ultimate Battle: Okinawa 1945-The Last Epic Struggle of World War II*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. Pg188

element reflects their heavy use in the real world battles, where there were “huge opportunities for the deployment of snipers by both sides.”<sup>26</sup> The next missions, "Their Land, Their Blood," and "Blood and Iron" cover the Battle of Seelow Heights on April 16, 1945, while "Ring of Steel" and "Eviction" depict the final Soviet push into Berlin on April 23-24, 1945.

“Blood and Iron” has the player agent take control of a T-34 tank, equipped with a flamethrower. While it is unrealistic for player agent Pvt. Petrenko to suddenly command a T-34 tank, it does reflect their heavy usage during the Battle of Seelow Heights.<sup>27</sup> The game culminates with "Heart of the Reich" and "Downfall," set on April 30, 1945, with the storming of the Reichstag. Players even recreate Yevgeny Khaldei’s iconic photograph by planting the Soviet flag atop the Reichstag at the end of “Downfall” (see fig. 2).

Cutscenes introduce each mission with a quick look at the historical events and strategies shaping the Eastern Front. The cutscene for “Their Land, Their Blood” introduces Operation Barbarossa, the massive Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, which began on June 22, 1941. Graphics depict the relentless advance of Army Groups North, South, and Center, pushing into Soviet territory. Significant battles are highlighted, including Minsk in June, Smolensk in July, Kiev in August, with the siege of Leningrad beginning in September of 1941. The graphics shift to depict the German drive toward Moscow, focusing on Operation Typhoon, launched on October 2, 1941, in a final bid to take the Soviet capital before winter. The graphics reveal the human toll of this effort, with 400,000 German casualties and 1.28 million Soviet casualties.

Interspersed between graphics, archival footage shows the grueling conditions that were faced as the winter months dragged on. The cutscene for “Blood and Iron” depicts that over a

---

<sup>26</sup> Ellis, Frank. “K-98 vs. Mosin M 1891/1930: German and Soviet Snipers at Stalingrad and on the Eastern Front.” In *The Stalingrad Cauldron: Inside the Encirclement and Destruction of the 6th Army*, 264–306. University Press of Kansas, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Zaloga, Steven J. *Tanks in the Battle of Germany 1945: Eastern Front*. Osprey Publishing, Nov 22 2022, Pg. 13

million Soviet soldiers confronted 100,000 Germans in one of the last desperate defenses of Nazi Germany.<sup>28</sup> However, the number was more likely closer to 770,000 German defenders.<sup>29</sup> The introduction for “Ring of Steel” presents players with graphical depictions of the Jan 12th Vistula–Oder offensive, where Soviets marched from the Vistula River to the Oder River. The game cuts to a view of Berlin’s final defenders on April 20, 1945, presenting Wehrmacht soldiers and hastily enlisted civilians preparing to meet the advancing Soviet soldiers in a final stand. This would be expanded upon in the next cutscene for “Eviction,” where narrator Sgt. Reznov dictates how the Nazis had enlisted “The old, the young [and] the weak” in a final effort to defend Berlin. This corresponds with the Volkssturm, a Nazi militia formed in the final months of the war, consisting of those too young or too old to enlist in the Wehrmacht.<sup>30</sup> Archival footage shows exhausted troops and destroyed cityscapes, mirroring the scenes depicted within the gameworld. In the mission “Heart of the Reich,” players can even encounter German soldiers hanging from lampposts, wearing signs that say “verrater in das mutterland,” which roughly translates to “traitor to the motherland”(see fig. 3).<sup>31</sup> This reflects the desperate fanaticism displayed by Nazi party members, who tried and hung those who refused to fight, or those who promoted defeatism in the final months of the war.<sup>32</sup>

The integration of authentic historical footage, accurate mission context and immersive gameplay creates a space where players not only engage with the tactical realities of war but also confront the emotional and human cost of the conflict. The immersive environments, archival

---

<sup>28</sup> “Blood and Iron” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Zaloga, Steven J. *Tanks in the Battle of Germany 1945: Eastern Front*. Osprey Publishing, Nov 22 2022, Pg. 12

<sup>30</sup> Blatman, Daniel. *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide*. Harvard University Press, Jan 3, 2011 Pg. 236

<sup>31</sup> *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Blatman, Daniel. *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide*. Harvard University Press, Jan 3, 2011 Pg. 260

footage, and gameplay mechanics shape a collective memory of the conflict that authentically reflects many aspects of the Second World War. However, despite the game's efforts, gaps in historical realism, such as the omission of environmental hardships from gameplay, and the simplification of complex battles, highlight the limitations of *World at War*'s historical representation. Nevertheless, through its unique form of interactive storytelling, *World at War* encourages moral reflection and the development of historic empathy, while constructing a nuanced memory of the period.

### **The Pacific**

The game's U.S. narrative in the Pacific heavily embodies elements of McCormick's "warriors code," placing camaraderie at the forefront of the narrative. The first mission in the game is a rescue operation to save an unresponsive reconnaissance team on Makin Atoll. The mission is based on a real U.S. Marine raid of the same date and location, and even features the real submarine, the USS Nautilus that transported the Marine Raiders to Makin.<sup>33</sup> While the mission reflects real world events and sentiments, it also engages in counterfactual history within its narrative.

The mission opens with the player agent, Pvt. Miller captured and forced to witness the brutal torture of fellow POW Pvt. Pyle. He is beaten, has a cigarette extinguished in his eye, and is ultimately executed, having his throat slit with a sword. The player character, set for execution, is spared only at the last moment when U.S. Marines storm the camp and rescue him. The real raid on Makin Island was an effort to destroy Japanese infrastructure, collect intelligence, and divert

---

<sup>33</sup> Wiles, Tripp. *Forgotten Raiders of '42: The Fate of the Marines Left Behind on Makin*. Potomac Books, Inc., 2007

attention from Guadalcanal. While the gameplay offers these experiences to the player, the real world raid featured no prisoner rescue, but rather the exact opposite. Nine Marine raiders were left behind, captured, and summarily beheaded by the Japanese.<sup>34</sup> In this way, the game takes a real world event, where nine Marines were captured and executed, and turns it into a prisoner rescue; A real-world American failure, where Marines were abandoned, becomes a heroic fictional success. However, while the narrative improperly promotes the idea of rescuing Marines on Makin, it does reflect the real sentiments that U.S. personnel had surrounding being captured by the Japanese.

In the cutscene leading up to the mission, fellow squad member and narrator for U.S. cutscenes, Sgt. Roebuck states, “For all we know, they’re already dead. If what little we know about the Japanese is true, it might be better if they are.”<sup>35</sup> Compared to the soldiers fighting on the Western Front, U.S. personnel in the Pacific Theater had a significantly different outlook on being taken prisoner. Over 40% of U.S. POWs would not survive internment under Japanese forces, a stark contrast compared to the 1% death rate of U.S. POWs held by Nazi Germany.<sup>36</sup> Corporal Eugene Bondurant Sledge fought at Peleliu and Okinawa, and described surrendering to Japanese forces as “impossible [...] because we knew what happened in Bataan.”<sup>37</sup>

The U.S. war in the Pacific was a uniquely brutal and psychologically taxing conflict. The jungle warfare provided environmental struggles, while the Japanese proved to be a unique enemy. Corporal Sledge recounted how the “attitude toward the Japanese was different than the one we

---

<sup>34</sup> Wiles, Tripp. *Forgotten Raiders of '42: The Fate of the Marines Left Behind on Makin*. Potomac Books, Inc., 2007

<sup>35</sup> “Semper Fi” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of the Navy. “U.S. Prisoners of War and Civilian American Citizens Captured and Interned by Japan in World War II” Naval History and Heritage Command, December 17, 2002,

<sup>37</sup> Terkel, Studs. “E.B. (SLEDGEHAMMER) SLEDGE” *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

had toward the Germans.” Soldiers that fought in Europe told Sledge about how the Germans “were guys just like us,” and that “when things were hopeless [...] they surrendered.”<sup>38</sup>

It was not often that Japanese soldiers were taken prisoner. The Senjinkun military code, a pocket sized military pamphlet stated, “if alive, do not suffer the disgrace of becoming a prisoner.”<sup>39</sup>

Active prohibition against surrender, along with a mix of fear and propaganda, led many Japanese soldiers to refuse surrender, and “most Japanese fought until they were killed, or committed suicide.”<sup>40</sup> In addition, many U.S. personnel refused to take prisoners.

While on Okinawa, Sledge and his fellow Marines discovered what they believed to be a destroyed field hospital. Inside, they found an emaciated Japanese soldier, who they removed in an attempt to render aid. The soldier seemed “very docile” until he suddenly “pulled a Japanese grenade out.”<sup>41</sup> A Marine promptly shot him before he could detonate the grenade. A similar situation occurs in *World at War*’s final Pacific mission, “Breaking Point.” Non-player-characters Sgt. Roebuck and Pvt. Polonsky approach Japanese soldiers who appear to be surrendering. Quickly, the situation devolves, as the Japanese soldiers pull out grenades, and the player is forced to save either Sgt. Roebuck or Pvt. Polonsky. Circumstances such as these led to the Marines adopting a ‘kill or be killed’ attitude.<sup>42</sup> In total, Sledge remembers taking five prisoners while on Okinawa.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Terkel, Studs. “E.B. (SLEDGEHAMMER) SLEDGE” *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

<sup>39</sup> Japan. Rikugunsho. 1941, Field service code (Senjinkun), “8. Honor,” Tokyo Gazette Publishing House, Tōkyō viewed 3 November 2024 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-372598481>

<sup>40</sup> Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company., 1986. Pg67

<sup>41</sup> Terkel, Studs. “E.B. (SLEDGEHAMMER) SLEDGE” *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

<sup>42</sup> Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company., 1986. Pg53

<sup>43</sup> Terkel, Studs. “E.B. (SLEDGEHAMMER) SLEDGE” *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

This distinct form of culture shock and unique combat dynamic is reflected by the game in multiple ways. In the game mission “hard-landing” the player encounters booby trapped war dead.<sup>44</sup> The same mission features Japanese snipers, camouflaged, hiding in palm trees. However, the most prevalent gameplay dynamic is the inclusion of Japanese banzai charges. Private First Class Frank Pomroy fought with the 1st Marine Division at Guadalcanal, and remembers being on the bank of the Tenaru River, when the Japanese would “scream and yell banzai, and come pouring over.” These banzai charges were “constant, [and] it started late at night, sometimes around midnight, one o'clock, [...] and went on until daylight in the morning.”<sup>45</sup>

In multiple instances, the player in *World at War* must defend against banzai charges. Often, the result of an enemy ambush, the player must fend off waves of Japanese assailants as they charge, bayonets held forward, screaming “banzai!” The very first mission in the game features a surprise banzai charge while traversing the jungle late at night. While the game simulates occasional banzai charges, they fail to reach the scale described by veterans.

Sgt. Richard Greer was also with the 1st Marines on Guadalcanal. Recounting his time near the Lunga River, he described when “two-thousand hit the line, every last one of ‘em was hollering banzai, banzai.” Sgt. Greer fought all night long from his defensive position, where bodies “piled up so high sometimes the machine gun fire wasn't effective, unless the crew had to go out and scatter [the bodies.]”<sup>46</sup>

In *World at War*, the banzai charges are restricted within the confines of the gameworld. The game cannot simulate thousands of non-player-characters, and deceased non-player-

---

<sup>44</sup> Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company., 1986. Pg64

<sup>45</sup> Pomroy, Frank. “Oral History Showcase: Guadalcanal Diaries Part I” Video, 2022. YouTube. The National WWII Museum.

<sup>46</sup> Greer, Richard. “Oral History Showcase: Guadalcanal Diaries Part I” Video, 2022. YouTube. The National WWII Museum.

characters do not present physical obstructions to the player agent. Rather than hours long ordeals, *World at War* presents banzai charges as speedy events, where the player must act quickly to survive. Furthermore, banzai charges typically appear towards the end of missions or at the end of particular gameplay segments. This aspect does reflect the nature of banzai charges, in that they were usually “gruesome and desperate acts of suicide,” used as a final resort.<sup>47</sup> These elements combined aid in constructing a historical space that captures and reflects aspects of the experiences of those who fought, while adapting them to suit the medium.

While *World at War* changes the scale and intensity of historical events to suit its gameplay mechanics, it still constructs a historical space that resonates with unique aspects of war in the Pacific. However, the game’s ability to convey the weight of this history is shaped by the limitations of the medium, and the specific choices of the developers. The racial nature of the U.S. war against Japan is minimized, if not ignored, creating a memory of U.S. personnel that is highly sanitized. Especially when considering that for “millions of participants, the war was also a race war [...] fueled by racial pride, arrogance, and rage.”<sup>48</sup> Rear admiral Gene Larocque recounted “we hated them [...] they were Japs. They were subhuman,” reflecting the dehumanizing views many Americans had during the conflict.<sup>49</sup> However, in the American campaign, the player never encounters a situation where the nature of the conflict deviates from a ‘kill or be killed’ scenario. The developers also chose to exclude the term “Jap,” a racial epithet widely used during the period, further deviating from the racial dimensions of the Pacific Theater. The developer's choice to ignore this fundamental element of war in the Pacific can be interpreted as supporting sentiments

---

<sup>47</sup> Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company. 1986. Pg45

<sup>48</sup> Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company. 1986. Pg4

<sup>49</sup> Terkel, Studs. “ADMIRAL GENE LAROCQUE” *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

of U.S. moral superiority, and is especially clear when compared to the developer's portrayal of Soviet soldiers.

## **Morality**

In multiple instances throughout the Soviet campaign, the player agent, Private Petrenko, witnesses and may even participate in war crimes.<sup>50</sup> Where *Saving Private Ryan* shows soldiers as “inherently averse to bloodshed and cruelty,” *World at War* does the opposite.<sup>51</sup> Throughout the Soviet campaign, the player either witnesses or directly participates in the execution of prisoners of war. The opening scene of the Soviet mission “Vendetta” has the player agent awaken in the ruins of a fountain in Stalingrad. The bodies of Red Army soldiers, dead and wounded, surround them. German soldiers approach, killing anybody that moves. The player must not move in order to survive. Later in the same mission, the player can find the bodies of Soviet prisoners who had been lined up against a wall and executed.

In the mission “Their land, their blood,” the player character is rescued from German captivity by Sgt. Reznov and Pvt. Chernov. The characters are now participating in the invasion of Germany, and some are actively pursuing vengeance. Sgt. Reznov orders Pvt. Chernov to execute the Germans who were wounded during the player agent’s rescue. Pvt. Chernov protests, as Sgt. Reznov hands the player character a rifle, stating, “then maybe our friend will help them

---

<sup>50</sup> “Eviction” “Breaking Point” “Ring of Steel” “Their Land, Their Blood” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>51</sup> Bodnar, John. “Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America.” *The American Historical Review*, Jun., 2001, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp.805-817

bleed faster.”<sup>52</sup> In the same mission, Sgt. Reznov orders the player agent to shoot retreating German soldiers in the back.

Throughout the Soviet campaign, the game often contrasts Sgt. Reznov and Pvt. Chernov, who regularly voices ethical objections to these wanton acts of violence. The player is not forced to side with either character, and is allowed to frame their individual gameplay experience alongside either one. At the end of the Soviet campaign, Pvt. Chernov’s diary is read aloud, where the player agent is characterized as either barbarous or merciful depending on their actions throughout the campaign. However, many instances play out the same, regardless of player choice.

The mission “Eviction” depicts the Soviet invasion of Berlin, and begins by featuring a German prisoner, on his knees begging for mercy. Soviet soldiers argue back and forth, with one exclaiming “what mercy did you show to our people!” Shortly after, a Soviet soldier executes the German prisoner, to which Pvt. Chernov retorts “this is not war, this is murder.”<sup>53</sup> Later in the same mission, the player is confronted with three German soldiers attempting to surrender at the entrance of a subway tunnel. Pvt. Chernov wants to take them prisoner, but Sgt. Reznov states, “death comes only two ways, fast or slow.”<sup>54</sup> The player is then presented with three gameplay paths. They may do nothing and watch as other Soviet soldiers burn the Germans. They may shoot the Germans, or they may burn the Germans themselves.

These moral conflicts challenge the notion of allied soldiers as inherently noble and begrudging participants in violence. In *World at War*, the desire for vengeance offers a portrayal of the emotional toll and ethical complexities of war that differ dramatically from strictly valorous depictions. This portrayal aligns with the brutal realities of the Eastern Front, where Soviet soldiers

---

<sup>52</sup> “Their Land, Their Blood” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>53</sup> “Eviction” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>54</sup> “Eviction” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

faced immense losses and horrific treatment. Under Nazi internment, they faced a 57% death rate, as “Soviet prisoners of war were the [second] largest group of victims of Nazi racial policy.”<sup>55</sup> The atrocities committed against the Soviet people promoted strong sentiments of revenge, which Soviet leadership openly encouraged. Partisans were instructed to swear a brutal oath to seek “a terrible, merciless, and unrelenting revenge upon the enemy... Blood for blood! Death for death!”<sup>56</sup> This drive for vengeance is reflected in *World at War* through Sgt. Reznov, who states: “Now it is their land... Their people... Their blood.”<sup>57</sup> The game is able to explore these sentiments in a unique fashion through its interactive experience, further emphasizing the horrors of war through its graphics and score. While the game uniquely humanizes these concepts, the developers do not portray the Americans as equally callous or barbarous, or even position them to face similar moral quandaries.

In this facet, *World at War* fails to share its exploration of ethics equally, unequivocally portraying the Americans as morally superior. While some Soviets relish revenge, just like *Saving Private Ryan*, no Americans “actually enjoy killing.”<sup>58</sup> Instead, Marines are witnesses and victims to foreign forms of brutality, such as banzai charges and kamikaze attacks. This tonal distinction is further amplified by the lack of perspective, dialogue, or nuance afforded to German or Japanese soldiers. Furthermore, neither campaign features any depiction of civilians as active participants in the narrative, despite the fact that civilians accounted for the largest percentage of casualties during the war.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Nazi Persecution of Soviet Prisoners of War." *Holocaust Encyclopedia*

<sup>56</sup> Overy, Richard, *Russia's War: A History of the Soviet Effort: 1941–1945*. Penguin Books 1999 Pg 175

<sup>57</sup> “Their Land, Their Blood” *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>58</sup> Bondar, John. “Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America.” *The American Historical Review*, Jun., 2001, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp.805-817

<sup>59</sup> “Research Starters: Worldwide Deaths in World War II: The National WWII Museum: New Orleans.” The National WWII Museum | New Orleans. Accessed November 2, 2024.

Through these portrayals, *World at War* demonstrates how the selective inclusion of moral complexities, or their omission, shapes public memory of World War II. By juxtaposing the brutality of the Eastern Front with a sanitized version of the Pacific Theater, the game reinforces narratives of American exceptionalism. These narrative choices invite reflection on how gaming as a medium navigates the fine line between historical representation and cultural mythmaking.

## **Tonality**

An element that makes *World at War* particularly powerful is its tonality. Where other FPS games emphasize action, power, and heroics, *World at War* propagates a somber, bleak, and serious emotional tone that stresses the trauma of warfare. This tonal approach goes beyond simple heroism, conveying themes of fear, loss, disgust, and horror. Unlike many other FPS games in the genre, *World at War* maintains a deliberate focus on the psychological and emotional toll of combat, creating a more grounded and unsettling portrayal. The game's soundtrack is noticeably haunting and unsettling; with slow, somber melodies that evoke a sense of melancholy and foreboding. Moreover, the game's sound design is crafted to elicit anxiety and dread. From the screams of soldiers to the sharp whistling of artillery strikes, the auditory elements heighten the emotional state of the player, creating a tense atmosphere. This is compounded by *World at War's* propensity for gore. Non-player-characters can have limbs amputated by explosions, while bullets leave entry and exit wounds on their playermodels. Fire can even cause playermodels to burn into charred disfigured corpses.

The use of disturbing soundscapes, graphic violence, and intense combat sequences is not simply for shock value; rather, it aligns with research suggesting that emotional experiences are

deeply tied to memory formation and learning. As Kessner and Cortes argue, "people create memories by having experiences in the world, and the more and stronger emotions associated with these experiences, the stronger the memories."<sup>60</sup> *World at War* exemplifies this concept, where the game is designed to evoke a visceral emotional response, forcing the player to emotionally engage with the brutal realities of warfare. Online community forums and discussions frequently highlight *World at War* as one of the most memorable entries in the *Call of Duty* franchise, with players often citing its impactful narrative and immersive atmosphere.<sup>61</sup>

In this manner, *World at War* can generate civic and historical empathy, directed towards the experiences of allied soldiers who suffered during the conflict. The emotional resonance created by these experiences can directly contribute to the formation of collective memory.<sup>62</sup> As players navigate the game's challenges, they may form lasting memories that are emotionally charged and historically grounded. These memories have the ability to shape how players perceive and understand World War II, not just as a series of strategic battles, but as a deeply personal and traumatic experience for those who survived, allowing for players to internalize the conflict in ways that purely didactic approaches fail to achieve.<sup>63</sup>

## Conclusion

---

<sup>60</sup> Kessner, T. M., & Cortes, L. P. (2023). Mechanics and Experience in Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: Opportunities for Civic Empathy. *Simulation & Gaming*, 54(2), 167-183.

<sup>61</sup> Achte, Kelly, Van. The Act Man. "World at War Is Actually a MASTERPIECE!," May 11, 2022.; Achte, Kelly, Van. The Act Man. "Why Was Call of Duty: World at War SO AWESOME?!", March 16, 2018.; TheUndeadGunslinger. "For Me Personally, Call of Duty: World at War Was Peak CoD. the Bleak and Ominous Atmosphere Borders on Being Horror. : R/Gaming," n.d.

<sup>62</sup> Kessner, T. M., & Cortes, L. P. (2023). Mechanics and Experience in Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: Opportunities for Civic Empathy. *Simulation & Gaming*, 54(2), 167-183.

<sup>63</sup> Ramsay, Debra. "Brutal Games: 'Call of Duty' and the Cultural Narrative of World War II." *Cinema Journal*, Winter 2015, Vol. 54, No. 2

In the game's final cutscene, colorized archival footage showcases a B-29 Superfortress taxiing, taking off, and in flight, harboring the name "Enola Gay." A haunting, rising score plays as President Truman states that "the victory won in the West, must now be won in the East."<sup>64</sup> The music stops as the footage of the Enola Gay fades to black. Silently, colorized footage of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima fades in. A solemn note plays as footage transitions to General Douglas MacArthur's speech aboard the U.S.S. Missouri. All music stops, as two bells toll with two final slides of text that read: "60 million lives were lost as a result of World War II. It was the most destructive and deadly conflict in human history."<sup>65</sup> At the very end, the developers chose to remind players not of what was won, but of what was lost.

By ending on a reflection of loss, the developers depart from the triumphant tones often found in World War II media. In this moment, *World at War* moves beyond the typical "warrior's code" framework critiqued by McCormick and Bodnar. Instead of glorifying victory, the developers chose to underscore the devastating human cost of the war, compelling players to consider World War II as a tragic period of human suffering. In this way, *World at War* emerges as a unique historical space, where players can cultivate historic empathy and reflect on the moral complexities faced by soldiers in the Second World War.

Through the lens of gaming, these war stories offer players an immersive way to engage with the complex experiences of veterans, shaping American memory by highlighting visceral, emotional, and physical realities of war. However, these games also have the potential to shape public memory in ways that may simplify or obscure certain aspects of history. The line between historical representation and narrative fiction can easily be blurred, and the impact of historical wargaming on public collective memory has yet to be studied.

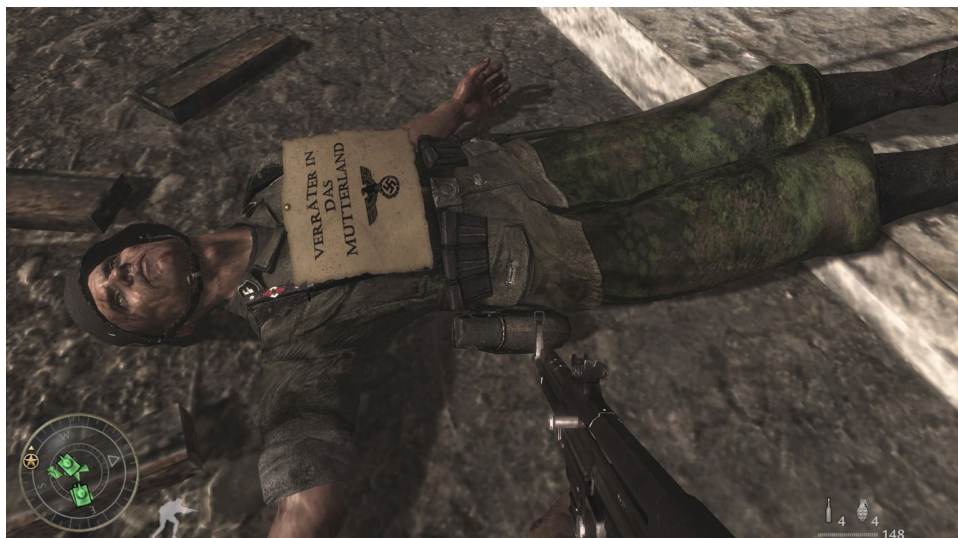
---

<sup>64</sup> *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.

<sup>65</sup> *Call of Duty: World at War*. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.



Figure 2. On the left, a screen capture from atop the Reichstag in the mission “Der Sturm” in Call of Duty: World at War (Activision, 2008). On the right, a black and white photograph of a soldier raising a Soviet flag on a rooftop amidst a destroyed city.



Works Cited

- Black Rifle Coffee Company, “BRCC Presents - Don Graves at Iwo Jima,” February 19, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UOwTJZzWzw>.
- Godfrey, Richard, and Simon Lilley. 2009. “Visual Consumption, Collective Memory and the Representation of War.” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 12 (4): 275–300. doi:10.1080/10253860903204428. [https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc\\_theses/2647](https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/2647)
- Wallace, Amy, “‘Ryan’ Ends Vets’ Years of Silence” *Los Angeles Times*, August 6, 1998. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1998-aug-06-mn-10608-story.html>.
- McCormick, Patrick T. "Saving 'Citizen' Ryan: Supporting a Just War or Just Supporting the Troops?" *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Spring / Summer 2009, Vol. 29, No.1, pp. 109-126
- Bodnar, John. “Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America.” *The American Historical Review* , Jun., 2001, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp. 805-817
- Edge Staff. "The Making of Medal of Honor." *GamesRadar*, March 30, 2015; Campbell, Colin, "How Steven Spielberg Inspired Today's Top Shooters." *IGN*, May 29, 2012. <https://www.ign.com/articles/2012/05/30/how-steven-spielberg-inspired-todays-top-shooters>
- Peel, Jeremy, "How the War Begun: The Making of Call of Duty." *GamesRadar*, Feb 3, 2024. <https://www.gamesradar.com/how-the-war-begun-the-making-of-call-of-duty/>.
- Savage, Phil. “Reappraising Medal of Honor: Allied Assault, one of our highest-scoring shooters ever” *PCGAMER*, July 4, 2017 <https://www.pcgamer.com/reappraising-medal-of-honor-allied-assault-one-of-our-highest-scoring-shooters-ever/>
- Hume, Mike, “The future of Call of Duty and ‘Warzone’” *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/video-games/2022/06/08/call-duty-future-modern-warfare-2-warzone-2/>.
- Medal of Honor (1999), Call of Duty (2003), Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30 (2005), Medal of Honor: Allied Assault (2002), Call of Duty 2 (2005), Battlefield 1942 (2002), Call of Duty: WWII (2017), Company of Heroes (2006), Medal of Honor: Frontline (2002),
- Roediger HL 3rd, Zerr CL. Who won World War II? Conflicting narratives among the allies. *Prog Brain Res.* 2022;274(1):129-147. doi: 10.1016/bs.pbr.2022.06.003. Epub 2022 Jul 25. PMID: 36167446.

- Call of Duty: World at War. Developed by Treyarch. Published by Activision, 2008.
- Ramsay, Debra. "Brutal Games: 'Call of Duty' and the Cultural Narrative of World War II." *Cinema Journal* , Winter 2015, Vol. 54, No. 2
- Moran, Jim. Rottman, Gordon. *Peleliu 1944 the Forgotten Corner of Hell Greenwood*, 2004.
- Graves, Don. Interview by Shawn Ryan. *The Shawn Ryan Show*. Podcast.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6naKvmyWAw&t=4748s&ab\\_channel=ShawnRyanShow](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6naKvmyWAw&t=4748s&ab_channel=ShawnRyanShow)
- Sloan, Bill. *The Ultimate Battle: Okinawa 1945-The Last Epic Struggle of World War II*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. Pg. 188
- Ellis, Frank. "K-98 vs. Mosin M 1891/1930: German and Soviet Snipers at Stalingrad and on the Eastern Front." In *The Stalingrad Cauldron: Inside the Encirclement and Destruction of the 6th Army*, 264–306. University Press of Kansas, 2013.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.11634958.8>
- Zaloga, Steven J. *Tanks in the Battle of Germany 1945: Eastern Front*. Osprey Publishing, Nov 22 2022, Pg. 13
- Blatman, Daniel. *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide*. Harvard University Press, Jan 3, 2011 Pg. 236
- Wiles, Tripp. *Forgotten Raiders of '42: The Fate of the Marines Left Behind on Makin*. Potomac Books, Inc., 2007
- U.S. Department of the Navy. "U.S. Prisoners of War and Civilian American Citizens Captured and Interned by Japan in World War II" *Naval History and Heritage Command*, December 17, 2002, <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/u/us-prisoners-war-civilian-american-citizens-captured.html>.
- Terkel, Studs. *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.
- Japan. Rikugunsho. 1941, Field service code (Senjinkun), "8. Honor," *Tokyo Gazette Publishing House*, Tōkyō viewed 3 November 2024 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-372598481>
- Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. W. W. Norton & Company., 1986. Pg67
- Pomroy, Frank. "Oral History Showcase: Guadalcanal Diaries Part I" Video, 2022. YouTube. *The National WWII Museum*.
- Greer, Richard. "Oral History Showcase: Guadalcanal Diaries Part I" Video, 2022. YouTube.

The National WWII Museum.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Nazi Persecution of Soviet Prisoners of War." Holocaust Encyclopedia. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-persecution-of-soviet-prisoners-of-war>.

Overy, Richard, *Russia's War: A History of the Soviet Effort: 1941–1945*. Penguin Books 1999  
Pg. 175

“Research Starters: Worldwide Deaths in World War II: The National WWII Museum: New Orleans.” The National WWII Museum | New Orleans. Accessed November 2, 2024. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-worldwide-deaths-world-war>.

Kessner, T. M., & Cortes, L. P. (2023). Mechanics and Experience in Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: Opportunities for Civic Empathy. *Simulation & Gaming*, 54(2), 167-183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10468781231156187>

Achte, Kelly, Van. The Act Man. “World at War Is Actually a MASTERPIECE!,” May 11, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DibwdGokbcQ>.

Achte, Kelly, Van. The Act Man. “Why Was Call of Duty: World at War SO AWESOME?!” March 16, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2w9QNNfEeU>.

TheUndeadGunslinger. “For Me Personally, Call of Duty: World at War Was Peak CoD. the Bleak and Ominous Atmosphere Borders on Being Horror. : R/Gaming,” n.d. [https://www.reddit.com/r/gaming/comments/14wgn1e/for\\_me\\_personally\\_call\\_of\\_duty\\_world\\_at\\_war\\_was/](https://www.reddit.com/r/gaming/comments/14wgn1e/for_me_personally_call_of_duty_world_at_war_was/).