

History 211: US Military History
Battle Papers
Due Monday, April 23, 2018 (by 5pm)

Objective

Students will submit an 8- to 10-page narrative research paper on a significant battle or engagement in U.S. military history (before 2001). All papers should use a variety of primary and secondary sources, covering at least three types of perspectives: American forces, enemy forces, and civilians. Good narratives will cover the essential chronology of the battle, but will also provide wide-ranging historical context that includes an explanation of how this story illustrates the evolving “American way of war.” Good papers will always begin with a compelling thesis statement or interpretative framework.

Main Guidelines

- All papers should include a title page with descriptive title and Chicago-style footnotes. No bibliography is required, but appendixes may be appropriate.
- This paper will count for half of the final project grade (or 20% of the course grade).
- Papers will be evaluated on the basis of their research effort, analysis and prose quality.
- Papers should be submitted as Word documents by email. Late papers will be penalized up to 5 points per day.

General Advice

- Choose a topic that offers an opportunity to explore an area of your interest in a fashion that will ultimately engage a general classroom audience online with a variety of compelling images of primary sources and which can also illustrate an important point (or points) about the interpretive debates over “the American way of war.” Make sure to use the Echevarria book for this purpose, but don’t be afraid to include interpretations from other books or articles on this topic.
- Organize this stage of the project as a traditional research paper with an interpretive thesis statement, using third person narration, and with the usual mix of high quality primary and secondary sources. Also make sure to take the three dimensions seriously and to show depth within each category: American forces, enemy forces and civilians. American and enemy forces should include both officers and enlisted figures, even if culled from secondary sources. The civilian category should include both politicians and families.
- You may choose to define battle or engagement broadly enough to include campaigns, but take care to organize yourself around a specific narrative episode.
- Please try to take regular advantage of consulting with Prof. Pinsker and with the Writing Center