

# RYAN POFF

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## **RESEARCH INTEREST**

My current research is focused on Japanese Americans during World War II, with a particular eye towards the motivation, experiences, and postwar memorialization of *Nisei* soldiers. I suggest that Japanese Americans served in the US Army during the war due to a complex nexus of societal pressures encompassing not only patriotism, but also notions of race and masculinity. In making the argument that *Nisei* soldiers fought due to racial anxieties, I analyze the ways in which non-Japanese descended US soldiers and military leaders racialized and perceived them. I argue that US propaganda depicted Japanese people as a subhuman and cowardly race, convincing some Japanese Americans to fight in an effort to disprove such aspersions. Likewise, I argue that the famous “Go for Broke” mentality, in which *Nisei* soldiers fought with an almost total disregard for their own safety, may have in part been a retaliation against US propaganda depictions of Japanese men as small, bespectacled, and effeminate.

## **EDUCATION**

***Ph.D., History, Texas Christian University, 2020-***

Dissertation: World War II *Nisei* Soldiers in History and Memory  
Advisor: Kara Dixon Vuic, PhD.

***M.A., History, The University of Alabama, 2019***

Thesis: Japan Bashing: Social Implications of the US-Japan Trade War  
Thesis Advisors: Sarah Steinbock-Pratt, PhD., Lesley Gordon, PhD., John Beeler, PhD.

***B.A., History, The University of Alabama, 2016***

*Summa Cum Laude*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### ***Articles***

“Anti-Japanese Sentiment and Action in Texas during World War II,” *Home Front Studies*, forthcoming

### ***Reviews***

Michael Brenes, *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy*, *US Military History Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, October 2022

### ***Encyclopedia Entries***

“Japan Cotton Trading Company,” Texas State Historical Association Handbook of Texas, forthcoming

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## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

“Reel Warfare: US Film in World War II,” Society for Military History, March 2023

“Unduly Harrowing:” Film Media Portrayals of Combat in World War II,” Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library World War II Emerging Scholars Symposium, May 2022

“Learned Hate: How World War II Propaganda Created Lasting Anti-Japanese Sentiment in Texas,” Organization of American Historians, April 2022

“The Japan Cotton Trading Company in History and Memory,” Texas Center for Working Class Studies, February 2022

## **COURSES TAUGHT**

### *Surveys*

US History to 1877 (Instructor, designed and taught all course components)

US History since 1877 (Instructor)

Western Civilization to 1648 (Teaching Assistant for Daniel Riches)

Western Civilization since 1648 (Teaching Assistant for John Beeler)

World History to 1500 (Teaching Assistant for Hadi Hosainy)

World History since 1500 (Teaching Assistant for Hadi Hosainy)

### *Upper Level*

US Military History (Teaching Assistant for Steven Woodworth)

War & Society (Teaching Assistant for Kara Vuic, built online exhibit)

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### *Graduate Instructor, 2023-*

Texas Christian University

### *Graduate Teaching Assistant, 2020-2022*

Texas Christian University

### *Graduate Research Assistant, 2021-2023*

Texas Christian University

### *Online Instructor, 2019*

The University of Alabama Department of History

### *Graduate Teaching Assistant, 2017-2019*

The University of Alabama Department of History

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*German Tutor, 2014-2015*

Tennessee Technological University German Department

*Administrative Assistant, 2012-2015*

Tennessee Technological University Millard Oakley STEM Center

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

*Texas Christian University*

Alice Carlson Applied Learning Center History Fair, 2023

AddRan Creativity Festival Judging Committee, 2022

Society for Military History Conference Volunteer, 2022

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Historical Association

Organization of American Historians

Society for Military History