

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

In the *American Historical Review* in 2007, Robert Citino published his article "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction." In his article, he boldly writes to his fellow historical scholars to end the prejudice against military history. He specifically targets his fellow military historians, commenting that his associates need to be "less resistant to contemporary trends in research" (21). Despite this caveat, he insists that the subject should be granted the same respect as any other discipline because military history interacts with other disciplines and aspects of history. By employing contemporary sources, Citino argues that military history endures as a multi-faceted aspect of history that explores subjects across content eras, despite scholarly rejection of the content.

One of the major historiographical issues that Citino questions is the dichotomy between public interest in military history and scholarly rejection of the subject. He describes the subject as "relatively marginalized within professional academic circles"(1), while hundreds of movies and books explore the topic for the public's interest. He states that the reasoning behind this marginalization stems from the stereotype that operational history focuses solely on the logistics of battle. Citino argues that military history explores an increasingly diverse subject matter as scholars research subjects that reach into divergent literature to reinforce their point. To support his point, Citino draws sources from his contemporaries to dive deeper into the innovative discourse that shows the diversity of military history. From 1992 to 2007, the author focuses on how military historians use the same methodology, sources, and questions as other types of historians from a different paradigm.

Citino explains that “operational history remains not only a vital part of military history, but of history itself”(7). The idea of “history and memory” provides an explanation of how we today understand the past, and military history focuses on the impact and influence of wars. He utilizes his colleagues’ work to focus on the idea that themes from military history have social, political, and cultural implications that remain unacknowledged. Citino takes John France and Kelly DeVries argument and maintains that their argument “investigates questions as to why wars were fought, why they ended, and what the participants expected to achieve from them”(8). The innovative study of “new military history,” which historians like France and DeVries study, focuses on the social aspects of conflicts, while “old military history” concentrates on operational history, which scholars hold as the only form of military history. Citino employs new military history to build his argument and counteract the diminishment of military history by framing the subject as going beyond operational history.

Citino concludes that military history goes beyond “parochial boundaries in order to touch upon fundamental issues”(21), believing that military historians and scholars from other disciplines need to accept the truth that the disciplines interact with each other (21). He pleads with his audience of colleagues to look beyond the ingrained prejudice against military history, recounting books and articles written by modern military historians that innovatively look at topics and events through a modern lense. He resolves the article with a change in tone, switching from a professional, academic tone to a more declarative and informal tone. Citino finishes the article by declaring that his “professional colleagues and friends in broader disciplines should try something genuinely daring . . . read military history” (21).