

Running head: WHY THE STUDY OF HISTORY IS IMPORTANT FOR MILITARY
PROFESSIONALS

Why the Study of History is important for military professionals?

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ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY OUTLINE

1. **THESIS:** Taking the time to study history during Army professional development courses such as the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) will help leaders during the decision making process by providing them with a knowledge of the successes and failures of strategic operations of the past.

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a. Introduction

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Abstract

During the past century our nation has dealt with numerous counterinsurgency conflicts. In these conflicts the U.S. Military has repeatedly had a difficult time dealing with an asymmetrical environment in which cultural understanding plays such an important role. We will examine three different situations where the U.S. Military either failed or succeeded in applying cultural awareness to counterinsurgency conflicts. The Philippines, Vietnam, and Operation Iraqi Freedom all have positive examples where U.S. leaders applied cultural understanding. Had the senior leadership, taken into account, the advice from the leaders on the ground history may very well have turned out a lot different. However, in these campaigns there are also examples of leaders failing to understand the culture and people involved in counterinsurgency conflicts that the odds of resolving the conflicts seem insurmountable.

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Many Armies fail because they put all of their interest into creating a plan that becomes useless ten minutes after the battle has begun. Remember the enemy, weather, and unpredictability has a vote into your strategy. This document is one which the author attempts to ignite a passion for rich education. Many people from various walks of life, classes of society, and educational levels, ask the same questions over and over again, “Why should we study history? Why should anyone study past wars and battles? What can be gained from reliving past hurts, pains, and injustices from our for-fathers of this great nation?” These and other critical and thought provoking questions; induce an opportunity of the incumbent to carry the torch of Liberty which this great nation was founded upon.

Leadership Philosophy

Students of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) are placed within a classroom with other students to share valued experiences and values. These values are sometimes taught within their child rearing years or learned from various assignments, continued education experiences, and various platforms. USASMA allots the authority of their Faculty Advisors (FA) to delegate their instructional responsibility to their assigned students. My FA and classmates rekindled my desire and love for history within this platform. The combination of their passion for detail analysis and interest for history validated my lack of commitment to this shared value. Today, it is my duty to learn, share, and educate others the importance to allocate time for studying history.

I must cover the three requirements of H100 in order to justify my experience with this precious topic. The areas I will present in this paper past experiences with insurgencies, counterinsurgencies, and NCO leadership.

American policy makers and intelligence analysts are currently struggling to consider the potential repercussions of failure in Iraq. Forty years ago, an earlier generation of United States (US) policymaker's thoughts concerning the implications of defeat in a similar conflict by the name of Vietnam. Iraq has been labeled by many American and journalist as the new Vietnam. Insurgencies and guerrilla tactics has dampened the credibility of our military might and strategy to fight and win in Iraq. Intelligence reports and news analyst are reporting the increase of America's and coalition forces' enemies, returning the strategy the US provided against to Afghanistan rebels against Russia's forces. We supplied them with weapons to drive the Russians from their lands. Reports on CNN and Fox News channels recite the resupply of insurgencies of Iraq are from Iran and other nations.

Philippines' Insurgency

Similar guerrilla tactics of reconnaissance in-force, search and destroy missions were used in the Philippines with Major General Otis and Philippine General Aguinaldo. MG Otis ran his enemies into the mountains and regrouped using the guerrilla tactics. He also used the terrain maneuverability in a foreign land to their advantage. Faced with a dilemma to achieve a convincing conquest; US leaders changed their war tactics similar to the irregular warfare concept. This decision came in the aftermath of loosing over seven thousand lives and \$400 million dollars in 1898. This tactics was used in earlier battles in the west between US Soldiers

and Native Americans. Most important one can see the importance of studying history prior to allocating assets or implementing war plans. History is showing and demonstrating her power!

Korean War

I will transition this paper with an American general who served in the Philippines and South Korea. MacArthur's former wife was married to one of his subordinate officers. This officer was reassigned to the Philippines and neglected to command Soldiers. This ex-wife of MacArthur divorced him and shared intimacy relationships and experiences with other officers in prominent positions. Would this personal experience, damage the credibility of MacArthur? I believe it did. Prior to deploying COL Loveless replaced the former commander of the 34th Infantry. Why? Soldiers contract Venereal Disease, to the extent the commander locked them on post and treated them as dogs. In turn, this in-humane treatment proved MacArthur's leadership could not motivate Soldiers of the Regiment to fight the initial North Korean forces with enthusiasm.

Regiment General moving ahead of schedule; General MacArthur Commanding Officer over the Korean War, proved to be one with questionable leadership skills and abilities. He deliberately ignored the Joint Chiefs of Staff and completed his agenda with precious blood of Americans Soldiers on foreign land. This decision was to protect his mental stake of arrogance against the Asian culture. History will inform you that insurgency took place between the North and South Korean conflict with insurgencies. North Korea supplied with foreign tactics and tanks to overrun and subdue South Korea. We should know that General MacArthur's men

motivation to fight was low and possibly disrespected a leader whose own household was disarray.

Recently we conducted an exercise with the history of General Poncho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico. General Pershing chased General Villa into Mexico, but to no avail; their efforts proved a failure. The local community within Mexico borders killed General Villa. Today we are on a hunt for Osama Bin Laden, whom was chased from the borders of Afghanistan. With more than six years and counting; our Soldiers has yet to find or capture Bin Laden. Both Villa and Bin Laden used unconventional tactics against our Soldiers. Why don't leaders comprehend the value of history and their patterns never change? History screams for the confirmation, wisdom, and experience of a Senior Enlisted advisor to aid this commander on behalf of the Soldiers. The role of the NCO in this case appeared vacant.

NCOs On the Battlefield

Some of the lessons learned from our previous studies of insurgencies, counterinsurgencies and NCO leadership. The advantage of adaptability of any insurgent force is traced to terrain, external training and resupply. Soldiers value good leadership and expect visual demonstration of it in times of war and in garrison. Today's policymakers are considering the same fate our country faced concerning Vietnam towards Iraq. History sounds her voice of reason concerning neglect. Decision makers fail to consult her wisdom shall inevitably face the consequence of repeating the same results of wars and battles. NCO leadership such as Sergeant York as a Senior Enlisted Advisor would turn the tables and motivate Soldiers to support their leader's goal to win the battle at hand. SGT York was a leader of strong morals and values

which infiltrated into the hearts of his men in combat. The leadership in MacArthur's ranks excluded the NCO and proved to be a costly one. History will shout into the streets, "The role of the Noncommissioned Officer is critical in war planning or training. Don't neglect them or me!"

SUMMARY:

People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been? Given all the desirable and available branches of knowledge, why insist—as most American educational programs do—on a good bit of history? And why urge many students to study even more history than they are required to? History is a precious gift to mankind to embrace or trample under for only a season. After the season has past, one must deal with the consequences of ignoring their greatest asset and friend. She cannot be ignored or thought of as boring. History is full of excitement and valuable wisdom for teaching and honoring this nation's vision: Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Every American, (born or immigrant) has the opportunity to achieve their own goals or dreams. Study history and find the path which prevents frustration and wasted resources such as innocent lives, blood, and lost of family values. After you embrace history, share it unto our future leaders which shall shape this nation and the Army. This is why I personally believe we should take the time to study “lady-history”.

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