

Media War:

During times of military conflict, interactions between the public and government--including the military specifically--are both critical and complicated. Since most of this interaction occurs through the 'media,' it is important to examine perceptions of how the media works and how this interaction shifts over time. Two panels will discuss this interaction and the media's performance in relation to the current Iraq conflict. The first panel will present a military viewpoint including panelists currently serving, veterans, and military families. A second panel will present views of academics specializing in media and politics.

Location: UNC Campus, 116 Murphy Hall

Purpose: The purpose of this event will be to use the film "Occupation: Dreamland" as a springboard for raising the level of public discussion concerning issues related to the war in Iraq. As the film creates a very human portrayal of the soldiers in this conflict, it can be used to inspire a broad discussion about media, history, and politics in relation to the current conflict and those that have come before it. By bringing together soldiers, veterans, and their families - as well as experts on media, politics, and history - the conference facilitators hope to create an environment in which the Iraq War can be viewed in its historical context. As such, this conference will explore the challenges American citizens and soldiers must address as we consider the influence of media on our understanding of the war and the consequences of that understanding."

Info: The film is being distributed by Rumur Releasing (rumur.com). Rumur and the filmmakers are working together with Working Films to get the film seen and discussed.

Structure:

Morning Session- 10:30 - 12:30

Soldiers' View:

10 minute clip from "Occupation: Dreamland"

A panel with soldiers and veterans as well as family members of both groups will discuss soldiers' rights and needs. How are they affected by media representations of the current conflict. Would they rather see more information? Does what they see on the news ring true with what they hear from others? Some of the discussion during this panel will make useful parallels between the Vietnam War and the current conflict.

This panel will also delve into the idea of how media representations of the conflict affect soldiers while serving and upon returning. This issue is especially touchy right now as anger is building up on both sides due to the actions of peace activists like Cindy Sheehan. Some say that calls of "Bring the Troops Home" damages morale. How do these soldiers feel?

Panelists

Captain Britt - United States Army
James Massey- Former Career Marine/ Recruiter
Garrett Reppenhagen - Cavalry Scout/ Sniper
Others to be announced

12:30- 2:00 lunch break

Afternoon Session: 2:00-4:00

"What we know, how we know it, and what it means".

10 minute clip from "Occupation: Dreamland"

In this panel, experts in media and politics will examine media coverage of the war and how that influences and is influenced by political and public life. "Occupation: Dreamland" provides a starting point for the discussion, which is given additional impetus by issues relating to media coverage of events in Iraq and Afghanistan, the impact on the military and their families, the controversy of Cindy Sheehan's protest, and television series such as "Over There."

Panelists:

Cori Dauber (UNC) Communications Studies
Daivd Paletz (Duke) Political Sciene
Napoleon Bryars (UNC) School of Journalism and Mass
Communication

Garret Scott Filmmaker "Occupation Dreamland"
Ian Olds Filmmaker "Occupation Dreamland"

www.occupationdreamland.com