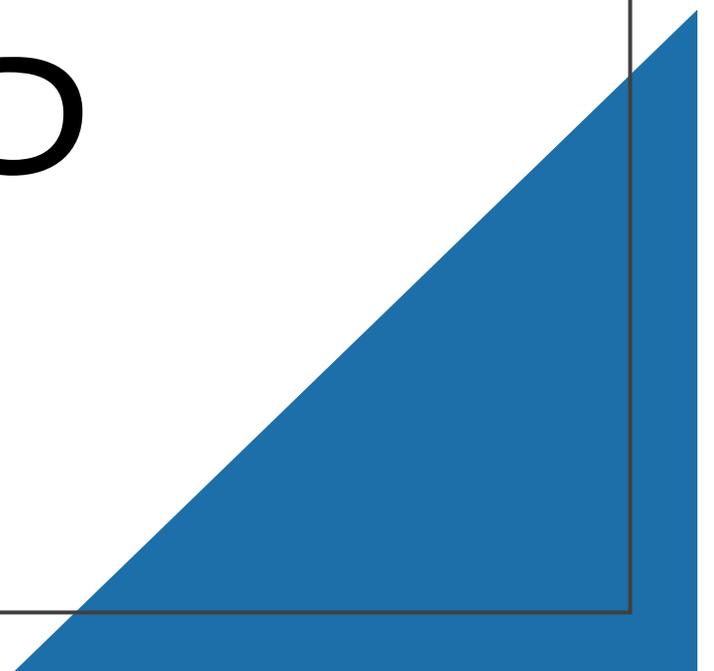
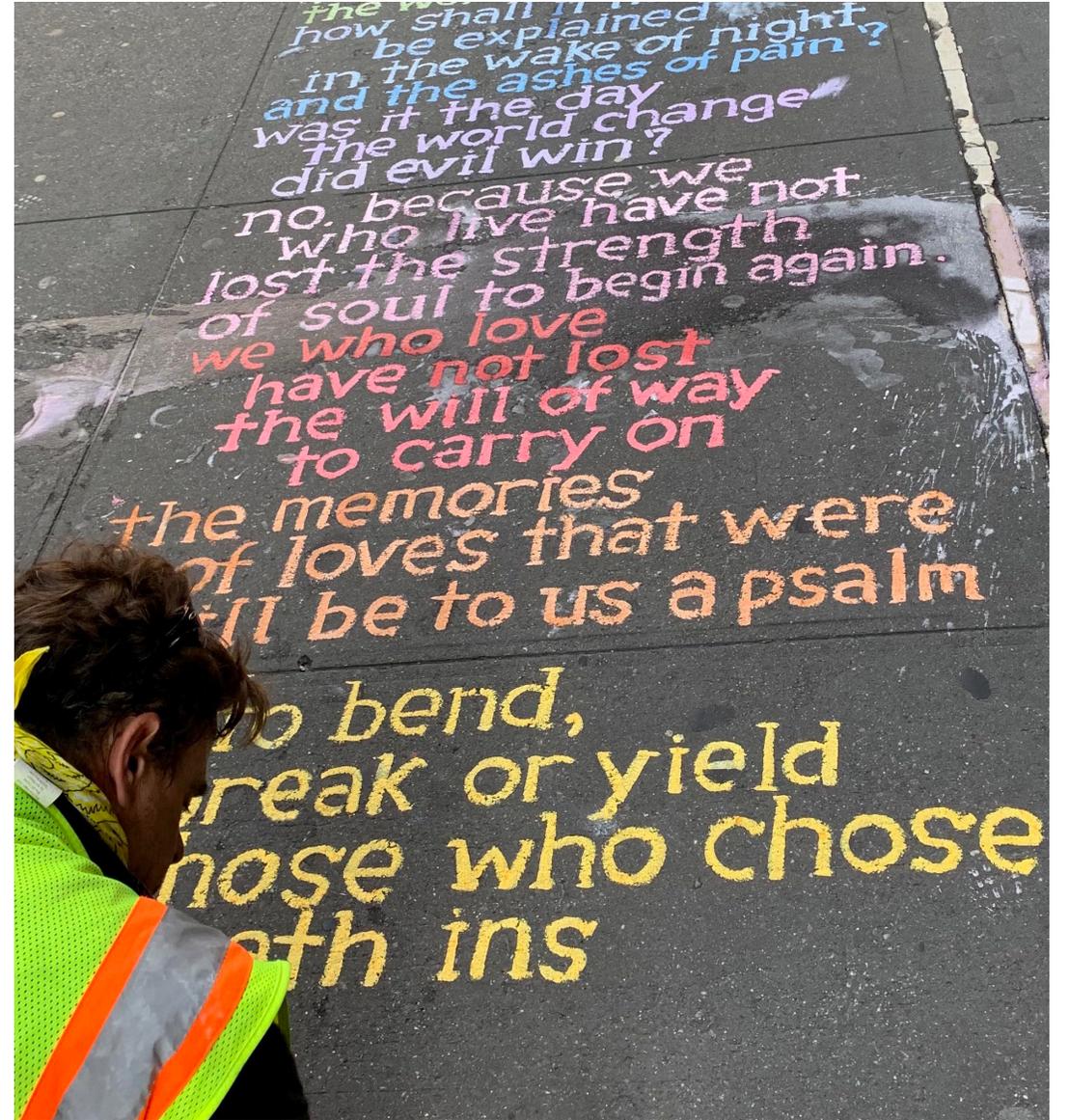


# ENGLISH 705

War, Gender, and Domesticity in American Fiction





how shall it be explained  
in the wake of night  
and the ashes of pain?  
was it the day  
the world change  
did evil win?  
no, because we  
who live have not  
lost the strength  
of soul to begin again.  
we who love  
have not lost  
the will of way  
to carry on  
the memories  
of loves that were  
will be to us a psalm  
to bend,  
break or yield  
those who chose  
ath ins



ISLAMIC EXTREMIST

IS TO

ISLAMIC

→ CHRISTIANITY

# Unspeakable Trauma?

---

James Berger: “Nothing adequate, nothing corresponding in language could stand in for it” (from the collection of essays, *Trauma at Home: After 9/11*).

Philosopher Jacques Derrida:  
“What is terrible about “September 11,” what remains “infinite” in this wound, is that we do not even *know* what it is and so do not know how to describe, identify, and even name it.”



Toni Morrison in her poem  
“The Dead of September 11”:

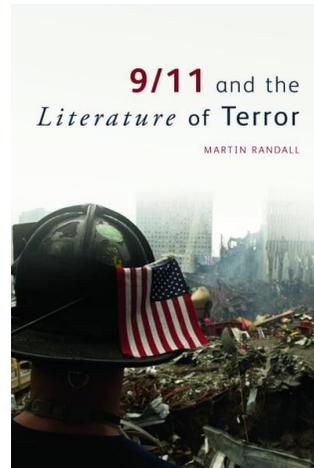
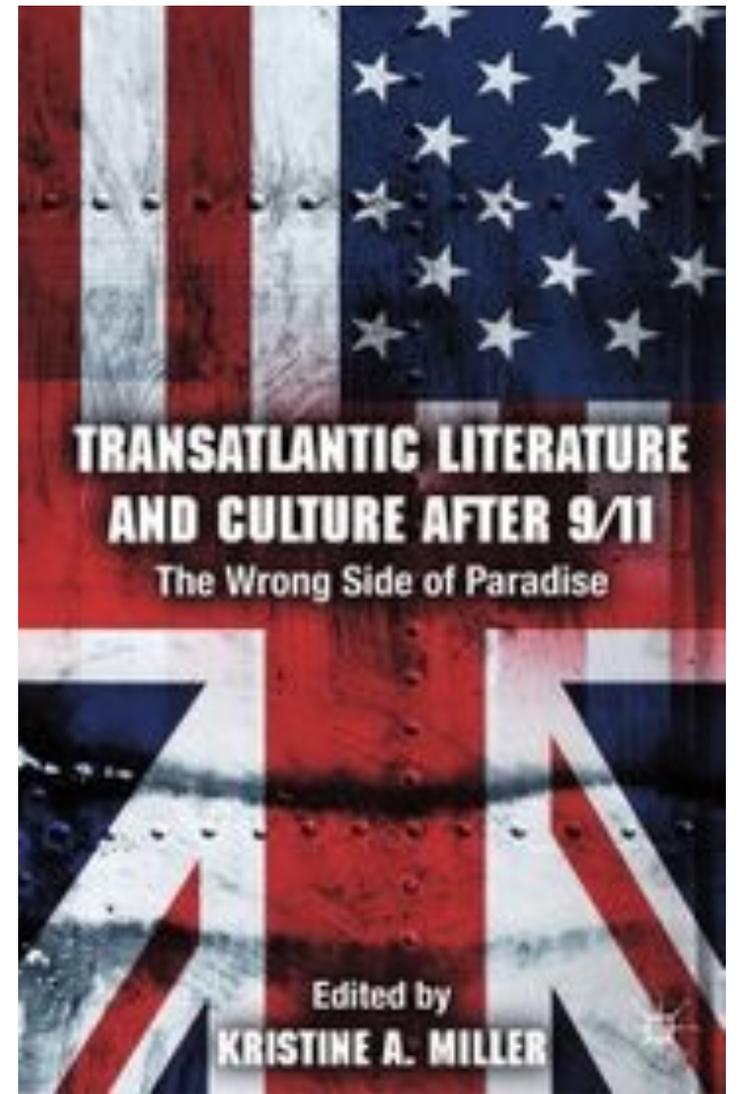
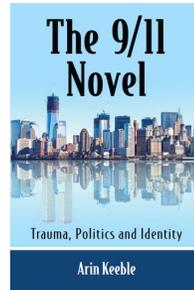
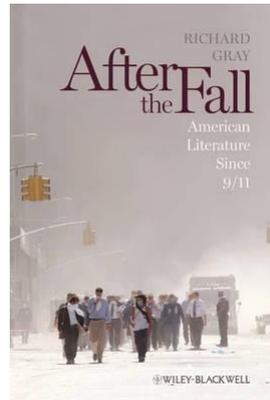
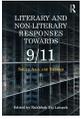
---

“Knowing all the time that I have  
nothing to say—no words stronger  
than the steel that pressed you  
into itself; no scripture older or  
more elegant than the ancient  
atoms you have become.”



**To write poetry after  
Auschwitz is barbaric.**

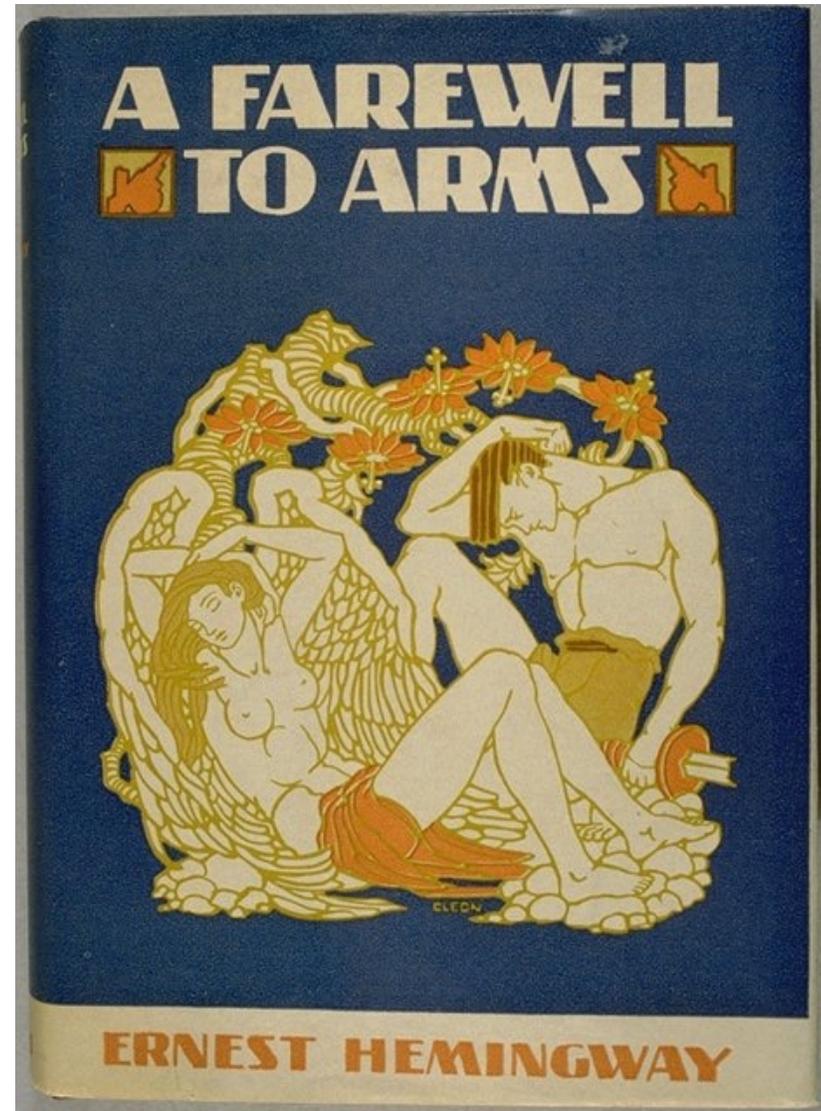
**Theodor Adorno**



Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*, musing on the words “sacred,” “glorious,” “sacrifice,” and “in vain”:

---

“We had heard them...and had read them...and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had real dignity.”



First Edition Cover, 1929





Kurt Vonnegut, in  
*Slaughterhouse-Five*, 1969

“There is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre.”

## Tim O'Brien from *The Things They Carried*

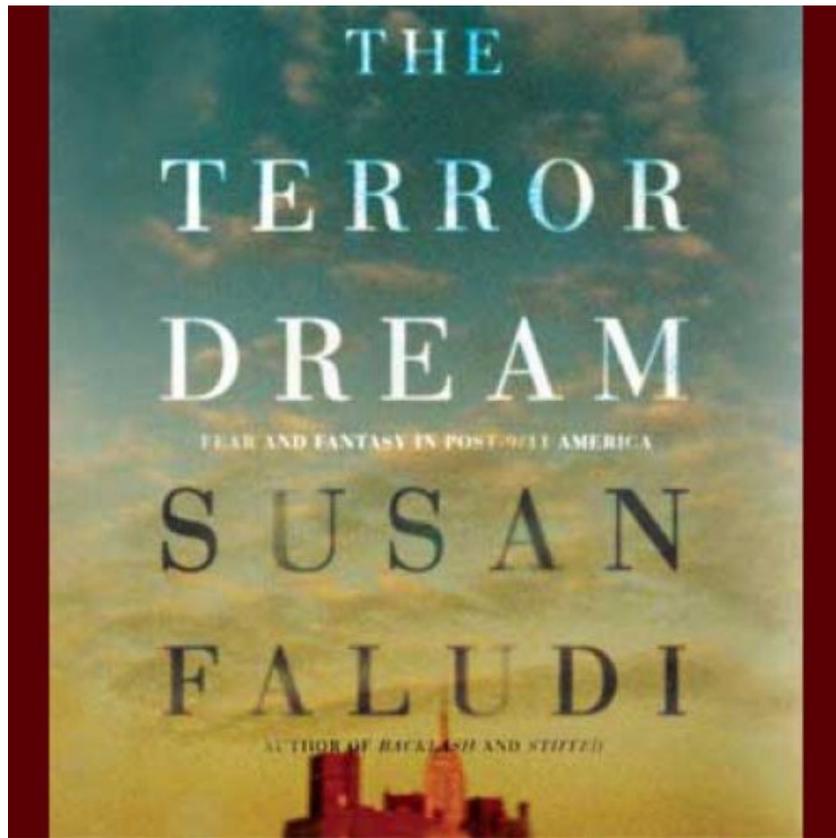
---

- “Absolute occurrence is irrelevant. A thing may happen and be a total lie; another thing may not happen and be truer than the truth” (from “How to Tell a True War Story”)
- “Story-truth is truer sometimes than happening-truth” (from “Good Form”)



## Two Shared Concerns

- The way that **gendered interests** are both constructed and played out during war
- The struggle to find a **meaningful form** in which to tell war stories



How are war stories gendered and who gets to tell them?

---

# For Home and Country



Illustrated by Cecil Gray

## VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

# WOMEN OF BRITAIN SAY - "GO!"

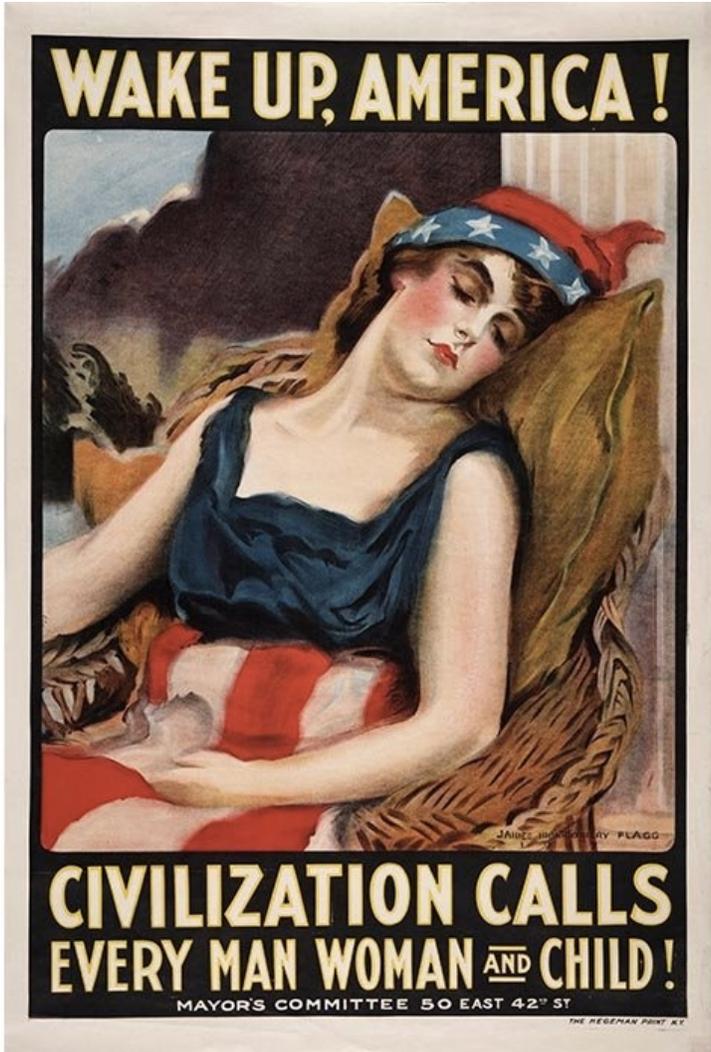


Printed by the PARLIAMENTARY BOOKLETING COMMITTEE, London. Paper No. 11.

Printed by HILL, SPENCER & Co. (S.P.A. Ltd.), Colton Works, London.

IWM

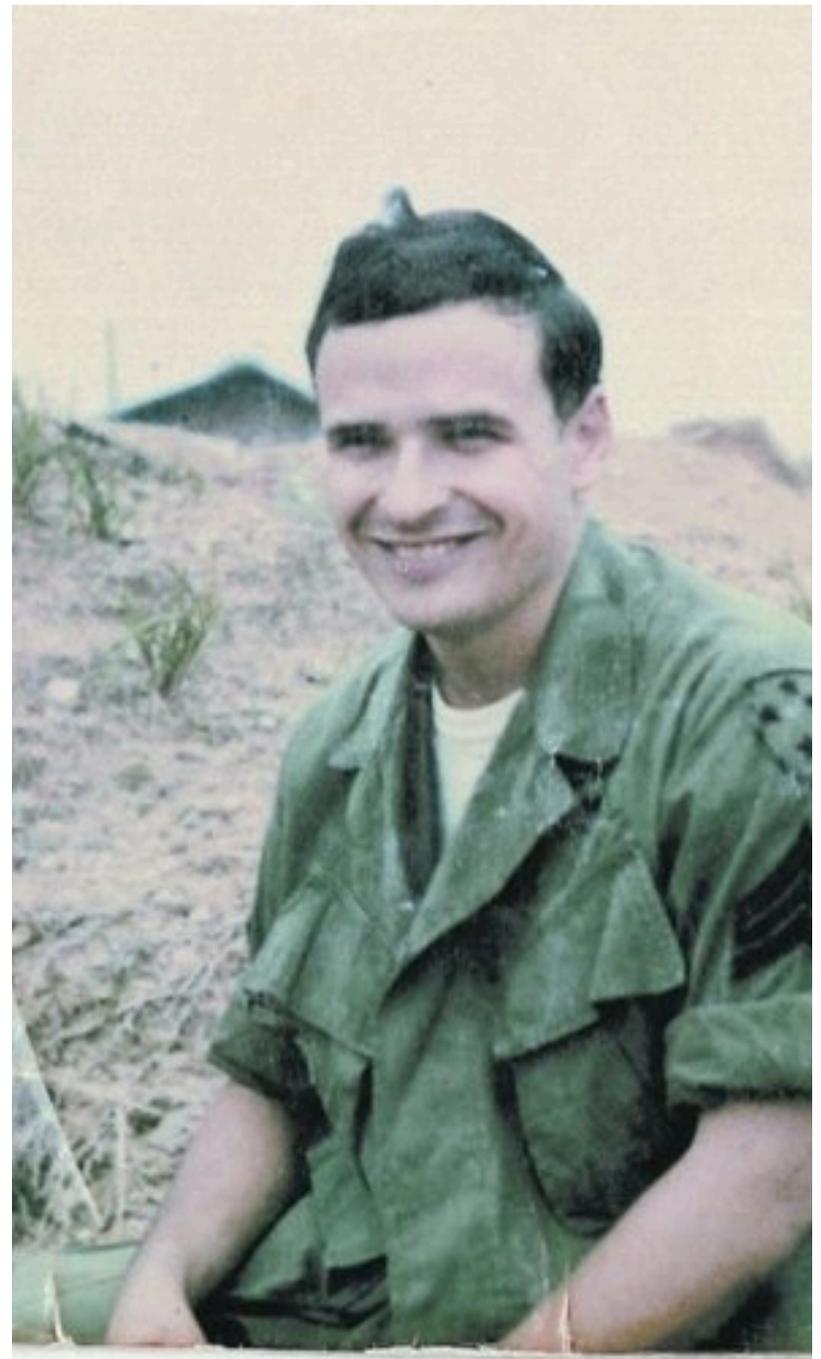
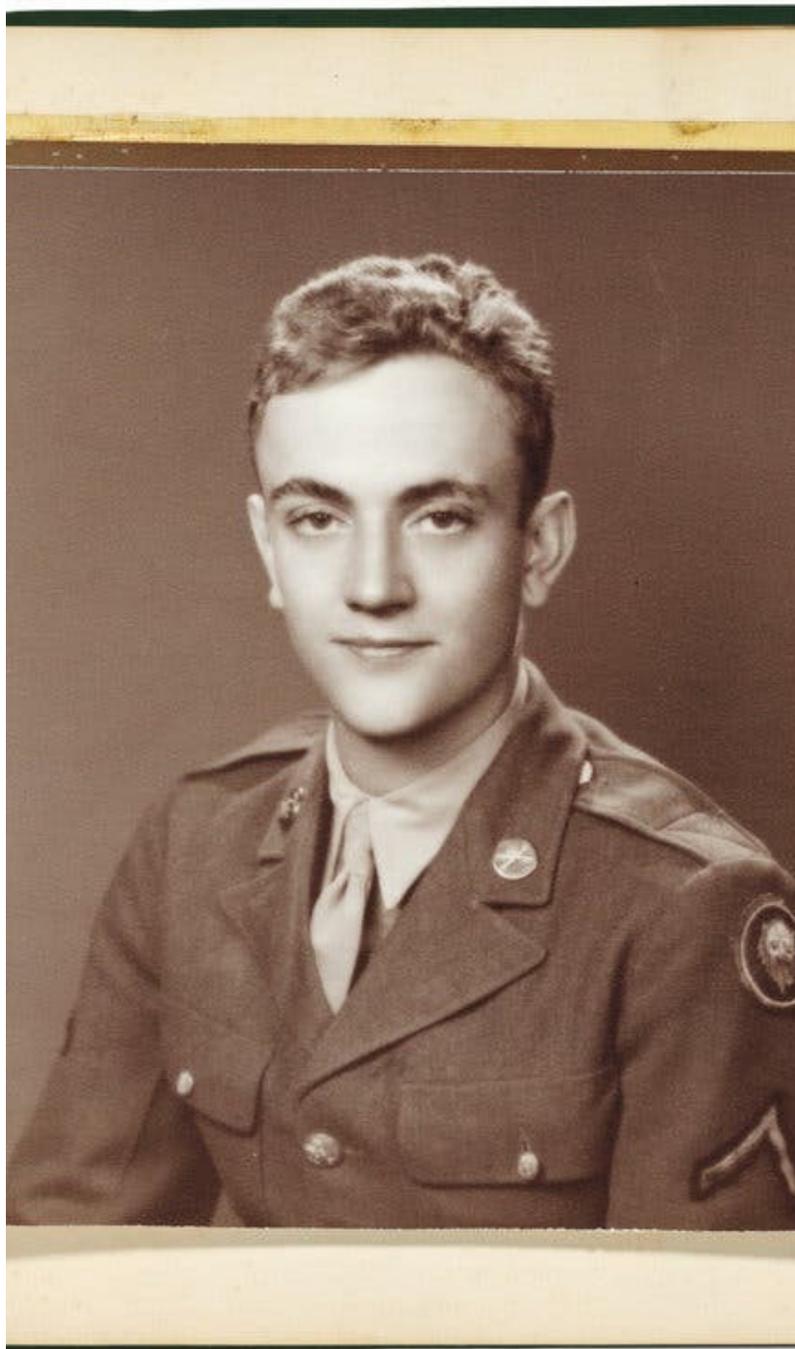




# Soldier/Author Point-of-View







# Some Myths of Masculinity and War

- True masculinity entails embracing war and a warrior culture
- Western history and cultural mythology can teach men how to behave courageously in wartime
- Truism that one good outcome of war is that it builds a sort of brotherhood among soldiers, a masculine bonding that trumps relations between the sexes and that women cannot possibly hope to understand.





# Two Views of Language

- Language of violence

- Emancipatory view of Language