

Warrior Patriotism: Criminalization, Militarization, and the Making of the U.S. Military

Maynooth University Department of Geography invites you to attend a seminar presented by:

Jenna Christian Bucknell University



Date: 6th December

Time: 4pm

Location: Rocque Lab, Rhetoric House



Within the United States, military service has long acted as a way to prove one's "Americanness," particularly for immigrants and communities of color who have often been deemed "not quite American." Within the context of anti-immigrant politics and white supremacy, the concept of "warrior patriotism" describes the special role of the military as a pathway to belonging and citizenship. Indeed, the U.S. military remains a key space to access social status and respect, benefits like health care and education, and even legal citizenship for immigrant service members. However, the positioning of warrior patriotism as a path to deserving citizenship inevitably rests on the parallel assumption of an undeserving subject—one who is not

only unworthy of care or protection, but more pointedly is targeted for criminalization, surveillance, policing, disciplinary control, removal, neglect, incarceration, or even death. This talk draws from three years of ethnographic research in Houston, Texas, where I worked with military recruiters, active military members, Black and Latinx youth considering enlistment, parents, community members, immigration activists, and Black Lives Matter organizers. Focusing on everyday life in Houston, the study examined the relationship between the military and the contemporary politics of race and citizenship across the city and nation. Informed by feminist political geography and critical race theories, this talk will share stories from Houston in order to demonstrate how the embodied politics race and citizenship are not only productive of the military—the military is also productive of citizenship. Ultimately, the conditional inclusion of some people into the category of citizen via the military is tenuous within a broader landscape of white supremacy. Moreover, I argue, it does not challenge the foundational division between citizen/non-citizen subjects—a dichotomy which remains responsible for much violence.

Department of Geography Seminar Series

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