Twitter Thread by Dr. Adam H. Domby



Dr. Adam H. Domby
@AdamHDomby



Now you know I love to sh-t in Harvard. But I also like accuracy. So I decided to go look at Harvard's catalog to see its lack of military history that this article describes (they only teach history of pets it claims) and what I found shocked me! Shocked me! A thread: 1/

> \u201cMilitary history\u201d is only in decline if you\u2014like the author & experts in this obnoxious piece\u2014see the subject as a narrowly defined, white dude-oriented, guns & bayonets approach. The field is 1000% better off w/today\u2019s diversity of topics & historians. https://t.co/dUf3OWyVpQ
>
> — Jonathan S. Jones (@_jonathansjones) February 1, 2021

First off, Harvard students literally have multiple sections of military history that they can take listed. (It appears these ones are taught at MIT, so they might have to walk down the street for these) but... 2/

Say they want to stay on campus...they can only take numerous classes on war and diplomacy...3/

They have an entire class on Yalta. That's right. An entire class on Yalta. 4/

But wait! There is more! They can take the British Empire, The Fall of the Roman Empire for those wanting traditional topics... 5/

But it's not over! This is my favorite. They literally have a class taught by @DrewFaust28 on war stories. That's right. An entire class by one of the leading authorities on Civil War history and it's reserved for Freshman! 6/

So I tried to find a history of pets. All I could find was this history of pests...the pets in history class is not being offered (and wasn't from the history department in the first place) 7/

I could go on but I think I've shown it's an article exaggerates. How did I know that everyone at Harvard doesn't care about studying wars? Cause I've been invited to speak to Harvard classes and I study war. 8/

Perhaps the decrease in history majors doesn't come from a decline in history major but the constant devaluing the humanities and obsessing over STEM for the past 30 years? Indeed attacking other forms of history than military as not

valuable contributes to this problem. 9/

How many times have I heard military historians whine about gender historians, or historians of the body, or historians of pets being irrelevant? More than I hear anyone say military history is totally irrelevant. I hear people say it's not their thing but not that its useless.10

Maybe instead of attacking subfields to puff ourselves up we should be remind folks all fields of history have something valuable to teach us. Scholars of diplomacy should realize historians of any field are their natural allies. 11

The issue isn't devaluing of military history. It's the devaluing of history and of the humanities more generally. 12

So to conclude while I still firmly believe that Harvard sucks (and Princeton doesn't matter-sorry @KevinMKruse, but you understand college rivalries I know) Harvard actually has lots of military history options. And military history is not dead. 13/13

Of course the first tweet in my 13 tweet thread has a typo.

And it appears there are even more classes on war taught than I realized...(thank you @DrewFaust28 for letting me know about these classes) https://t.co/Koywhf3KP2

> Thanks Adam. I also taught a Civil War class for grads and undergrads last spring. There are great options here for students interested in war. One student in my class this semester told me that three out of his four current classes are on war.
>
> — DrewFaust (@DrewFaust28) February 1, 2021

As @MilHist_Lee (who helped train me in *checks notes* military history) points out, other schools also have similar offerings. https://t.co/1mhpou8jwN

> UNCs list of related courses (just in the history dept!) pic.twitter.com/pDgDdxoT2F
>
> — Wayne E. Lee (@MilHist_Lee) February 1, 2021

And another list of classes about war that are being offered. This one from @TomSugrue. https://t.co/ugwiQIAgrN

> My current department, @NYUHistory, offers courses on the Crusades, US Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Cold War, the Vietnam War and more. We have a two-year visiting position in military history that has brought some amazing scholars to our department over the years.
>
> — Tom Sugrue (@TomSugrue) February 1, 2021