Dulce et Decorum est: Moral Injury in the Poetry of Combat Veterans

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Abstract

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Conventional studies of veterans' longitudinal mental health approach the topic through the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) lens. This qualitative study shifts the focus from a PTSD psychosomatic-centric approach to a psycho-spiritual examination of the sequela of war in the veteran psyche: this approach has been named in recent literature, *moral injury.* Utilizing a methodological approach situated in the philological region of hermeneutics, a Reductionist dialectic was selected. This study illustrates that the quotidian war poetry read by this researcher exhibits psycho-spiritual moral injury. The relevant emergent themes of the study include: (a) the function of memory, of not-forgetting, (b) the psychological torment of psychic dismemberment, (c) the acknowledgment of suffering in archetypal salt, and (d) the not-forgetting component of psychic re-memberment necessary for resolving moral injury. Reorienting the focus from PTSD to moral injury, this study finds critical implications to helping war veterans with their sequela of war. For instance, conventional treatments for PTSD such as prolonged exposure (PE) or cognitive behavior therapy, (CBT) while effective for treating the co-morbid symptoms of PTSD, do not address the profound insights which can be gleaned from re-examination of the phenomena in terms of moral injury. Most importantly, moral injury as a psycho-spiritual dilemma is something for which the veteran must embrace primacy in seeking resolution, working outside of the typical evidenced-based therapies.

This comports with the alchemists who cautioned: Only by working with intense focus on self-transformation can the lapis philosophorum be achieved.

Keywords: moral injury, war trauma, war poetry, veteran mental health, PTSD

Dedication

To all the veterans of all the wars:

> We are pain and what cures pain,
> both.
> We are the sweet cold water and the jar that pours.
> I want to hold you close like a lute,
> so that we can cry out with loving.
> Would you rather throw stones at a mirror?
> I am your mirror and here are the stones.

~Rumi

To all the reference librarians who helped move this work forward:

> Especially Sophia in Sedona, who gave her best to Ares in the graveyard of empires.

To my committee, thanks for your guidance and support.

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List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Topic

This Work's Title

The title of this work is deliberately ironic, taken from Wilfred Owen's (1920/1998) famous poem, *Dulce et Decorum*, where he invokes the image of a gassed man dying on an ambulance wagon and concludes with, "dulce et decorum est pro patria mori or it is glorious to die for one's country" (p. 161). This ironic poem juxtaposes the supposed gloriousness of battle and death with the reality of those fighting and dying highlighting, as James Hillman (2004) would put it, a terrible love of war. There is Eros, a chance at transcendent glory and eroticism all mixed with the brutal reality of the violence and horror on the field of battle. Psychologically, in the aftermath of combat, the warrior often needs to come to terms with this paradox of eroticism and brutality, of Ares and Aphrodite. This duality of violence and eroticism is also captured in sculpture. For instance, these juxtaposed gods are seen in Antonio Canova's *Mars et Venus*, Mathieu Kessels' *Mars and Cupid*, and John Gibson's *Mars Restrained by Cupid*.

War-making, Near and Far

As this poem, Hillman, and sculptures show, this war-making aspect of humanity is not new. Rather, it points out that the history of mankind is one littered with violence. From the most primitive beginnings through modern man, our capacity for organized violence and war-making has only expanded. There are early images of individual homo sapiens grabbing an expedient weapon and bashing in another's head, to the war images of today; the cruise missiles, drone strikes and their aftermath fill our screens and newspapers in a sanitized, diluted and packaged image. In the Western world, the primitive image of one-on-one violence and war-making embodied in the mythical image

of Ares has given way to war-making as Apollonian that is conducted from a distance bereft of the ensuing gore and crushing psychological effects of the battlefield. Hillman (2007) said, "Mars [Ares] moves in close, hand-to hand, Mars *propior* and *propinquus*. Bellona is a fury, the blood, the blood-dimmed tide, the red fog of intense immediacy. No distance" (p. 134). Further he adds:

> In fact, we need to look again at the aesthetic aspect of Mars….at this language, these procedures as the sensitization by ritual of the physical imagination. Consider how many different kinds of blades, edges, points, metals and temperings are fashioned on the variety of knives, swords, spears, sabers, battle-axes, rapiers, daggers, lances, pikes, halberds that have been lovingly honed with the idea for killing. (p. 130)

Edged weapons belong to Ares. They point, literally, to the need for no-distance. If Ares is represented by the no-distance blade, then Apollo's silver bow points towards distance: the place of artillery, missiles and bombs.

This distancing of the reality of Ares' gory mode of combat has led to a Western population with very little experience of the effect of war on individual combatants; particularly, a population whose warrior class is self-selecting in an all-volunteer military. Thus, many can live insulated from forced conscription and what that means for individuals, families and towns. Rather than warriors forced into servitude of the state, representing a cross-section of the population from which they are drawn, warriors are self-selecting for the initiation and test. Psychologically and physically, the new recruits are distanced from the general population and sequestered on bases, forts and training fields. The all-volunteer armed forces prevalent in the US and Western Europe today are

not only self-selecting, they are also further segmented based on the needs of the armed forces at any given time. Thus in war time standards might be relaxed because of the need for manpower. However, the recruit is further segmented from the general population in that they know there is a high likelihood that they will be sent to a combat zone as soon as they complete and pass initial training. In a divided culture, such as in the US today, the person willing to undertake what will likely result in combat represents a segment of a segment of the general population.

Warrior Initiation and Reintegration

In building the modern warrior class, Western society has distanced itself from the psychological preparation and consequences of combat. Societies have created and practiced rituals to activate the warrior archetype. For example, in the past, elders and medicine men would have helped prepare warriors for combat through ritual. In most Western societies today, these initiation rites, along with the clan chief, elders, and medicine men, have been supplanted by the initiation rituals of boot camp. Unfortunately, for the modern warrior, there has been little thought or practice given to ritualistically cleansing or reintegrating the warrior back into civil society upon his return from combat. Instead, the individual is expected to reintegrate himself, make his or her own meaning and sit with the images given by experience and the individual psyche. Julie Sgarzi (2009) succinctly summarizes:

> We have ceremonies and sacred rites for those killed in battle, but unlike the Navajo people, we lack the needed rituals to contain the full impact of the experiences of these surviving warriors. In short, the modern warrior is left to confront their shadow warrior on their own, placing their experience in an

> individual context. Collectively, we muse that they are the lucky ones….in our yearning for a normality that would deny the darkest shadows of combat. (p. 244)

Thus, the returning warrior is often left to "resume his or her pre-war life as quickly as possible, devoid of the ravages of combat, loss, and brutality he or she remembers all too well" (Sgarzi, 2009, p. 244).).

One of the problems of this modern approach to holding war at arms-length is society's abdication of responsibility to provide a psychological container for the modern warrior when he or she returns from the field of combat. In a culture divided, there is no longer a shared acceptance of what society is asking the warrior to do on its behalf. This results in little to no shared responsibility for asking them to take the field, with all the concomitant horrors that entails. Nor does there seem a willingness for or recognition that modern society needs to participate in the reintegration of the warrior upon their return. In short, society short-shrifts making shared meaning out of the war experience with returning warriors by providing a framework to help integrate the horrors of actual combat with the warrior's own moral sense of right and wrong. For instance, Lawrence Gross (2007) writing on the way Native American's reintegrate through tribal ceremony states:

> Of special note, though, is the help tribal ceremonies and healing practices afforded these veterans in overcoming some of their challenges. Of the number who believed they had resolved their problems, anywhere between 65 percent and 85 percent stated that they had attended ceremonies, depending on the respective problem. (p. 375)

This community approach is also exhibited in the Marine Corps' recent willingness to incorporate Native American led ceremonies and talking circles (Boothe, n.d.). Of the combat veterans that are known to this author, none have been asked to participate in any kind of officially sanctioned reintegration ritual or program. Instead, each individual has to discover his or her own meaning of what their participation means to them and their psyche.

Chapter 2: The Research Problem and Questions

The Research Problem

In the United States, the Department of Veterans Affairs has de facto control over how veterans' mental health is approached, both from a theoretical as well as treatment modality. The only acknowledged diagnosis and treatment modalities are oriented toward a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or more recently, traumatic brain injury (TBI) with treatment protocols centered on CBT or PE. These protocols are effective at treating the outward symptoms of PTSD, but as Litz, "Stein, Delaney, Lebowitz, Nash, Silva, and Maguen (2009) suggest, there exists evidence that combat veterans suffer from a moral injury requiring different treatment protocols. This concept of moral injury in conjunction with combat veterans is fairly recent, emerging only in the first decade of the 21st century. However, even as this new literature points to a novel conception of what combat veterans are suffering from, historically, very few researchers and therapists seem interested in understanding moral injury from the veteran's perspectives: Edward Tick (2005 & 2014) and Robert Jay Lifton (1973) being exceptions. There have also been a number of contemporary authors publishing over the last 5 years who point towards interest in this perspective; this turn towards a new understanding, marks perhaps, a turning point in how combat veterans' war experiences and their aftermath are understood in the United States.

The military's institutional predilection as well as society's to distance themselves from the psychological effects of war on the individual psyche, leads to a medical symptomological approach of post-facto treatment. After the Vietnam conflict, trauma treatment models developed for the victims of forcible rape were adapted to treat war

veterans (see Foa & Kozak, 1985; Foa, Steketee, & Rothbaum, 1989; and Foa, Rothbaum, Riggs, & Murdock, 1991). Ever since the publishing of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (3rd ed.; DSM-III; American Psychiatric Association, 1980), or DSM-III, PTSD has been differentiated from previous theories by the assumption that the etiological agent is a traumatic stressor observed outside the individual, rather than being an internalized neurosis. Thus, current PTSD treatment models overwhelming address only external trauma stressors without regard to the ethics, morality or religious implications of war on individual veterans. The implication of this model is that the individual's ethics, morality or religiosity, or lack thereof, play little to no part in understanding an individual's psychological reaction to his war experiences. This epistemology, however, is beginning to be questioned.

Litz et al. (2009) have proposed a major conceptual pivot away from the PTSD diagnosis and the treatment of combat veterans via PE and CBT, instead proposing the concept of moral injury. In this model of trauma, the treatment modality proposes to bifurcate: by continuing to treat the somatic response to unexpected stimuli, while adding an internal component. I propose to take an even more radical move, by reimagining the etiological locus into interiority while suggesting the limbic fight or flight reaction to stimuli be tied to the complexes associated with individual psyches. This is not a trivial pivot, it explicitly challenges the accepted wisdom that the somatic response to an external trauma is the treatable trauma. Furthermore, it suggests that current treatment modalities put the cart before the horse; that is metaphorically creating functional alcoholics rather than recovering alcoholics.

Primary Research Question

Can non-canonical war poetry reveal or express the archon [ontology] of moral injury? By the term non-canonical, I refer to the concept of canon, present in both religious and literary contexts. A canon represents a generally accepted, authoritative account of what gets included in a particular collection of works. Thus, one canon of the Bible is the King James Version. The Catholic *The New Jerusalem Bible* includes the Apocrypha that the King James version omits. Other canon would include the *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Edition of Sigmund Freud* , Jung's *Collected Works* or the *Uniform Edition of the Writings of James Hillman*. In the context used here I am taking the quotidian approach. This is an attempt to capture the experience of the average, in-the-trench combat veteran rather than a romantic exposition of war. Notably, though a completely valid and helpful lens, I will not use Jonathan Shay's (1994 & 2002) lens of classical Greek poetry to view many of the problems associated with combat veterans. Instead, I am interested in the everyman approach and what they have to say about their war and post-war experiences as expressed through poetry.

Secondary and Related Research Questions

1. What is the telos of a moral injury in the combat veteran? How is this different from a PTSD diagnosis and the telos of that injury?
2. What does this telos open up in terms of the possibility of redemption or acceptance?

It is this idea of redemption that, I believe, separates the idea of moral injury from PTSD. There is an external shock associated with PTSD, and perhaps a crisis of faith or morality, but that component of the overall experience is currently not a focus of the

diagnostic criteria, nor of the accepted treatment modalities. Currently it is difficult to see the possibility of redemption in today's diagnostic and treatment environment. What seems to be missing is a moral, ethical or religious component leading perhaps to the possibility of acceptance and redemption.

Chapter 3: Researcher's Relationship to the Topic

"I'm saying that when your child goes off to war, you will never get him back. Not as he was, not the same boy. Changed, if he comes back at all" (Card, 2008, p. 3). I have been to war, twice, in two different decades, with two different military branches. I have experienced the traditional war of massed forces, of regimental-size maneuvering and killing, the Apollonic way of war. I have also experienced Ares, a closer, more personal, individual way of war. Neither are reconcilable with my psyche. Regardless, as the opening quote of this section states, the change is profound for any combat veteran, regardless of the actual conflict place or time it was conducted. Before the war experience, however, the archetypal warrior needs to be activated. In the next section, I describe my own initiation into becoming a Warrior.

Activating the Warrior: A Lived Experience

In the modern United States all volunteer military, participate in the mandatory boot camp experience, an activation that is at root, psychological death and rebirth. Lifton (1973) described it best when he said:

> The coercive desymbolization of basic training, its "systematic stripping process" in which the civilian self is "deliberately denuded" so that the recruit can reject his preexisting identify…[and] envelop himself instead into the institutional identity of the military organization…[and] accept his impotence in the face of military discipline and recognize the crushing recrimination it can inflict if he seeks to challenge it. (p. 43)

In the boot camp experience, we see the classic initiation that parallels Shamanic initiation, ritual death, dismemberment, and rebirth (C. M. Smith, 2007).

The arrival at boot camp is carefully scripted to immediately strip the recruit from his civilian identity. From my personal experience in the United States Marine Corps, all of the recruits for that series are flown in with a deliberate late night arrival. Immediately the new recruit is confronted by a non-commissioned officer (NCO) who seems to have an uncanny ability to spot the recruits coming off the plane without them identifying themselves. One is immediately sequestered, both physically and psychologically, by the NCO's instructions to not say a word unless spoken to by an NCO, then to follow him. One is led through the bowels of the arrival airport into a room in the basement where one is seated at a table to await everyone's arrival, with an admonishment to not say a word and that sleep is not allowed. Any transgressions receive immediate punitive measures. After an interminable wait in the timeless womb of the airport, we are herded onto four buses. The random bus we are herded onto contains our training platoon fellow travelers, though we do not know this yet.

After a deliberate, winding, two hour drive through the countryside, we arrive via a back gate into the Marine Corps recruit depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. The long ride in the dark, into the wee hours of the morning, is to convince us that we are physically isolated from "the world." This is reinforced repeatedly in the first weeks. Lurid stories about how we are on an island, that the rivers and sea marshes around us are scary, deadly places with alligators and water moccasins in them to pick off the lucky ones that survive the tides and currents. Stories of how the nearest civilian population that will immediately turn us back over to the Marines if we survive the arduous ordeal of escaping the island, are days away on foot.

The stripping of our identity, our death to our previous, non-warrior lives continues. We are given a paper bag that will serve as the container for anything that might remind us of our previous life. After searching our pockets and wallets for contraband, we are marked with our new, collective identity: a sharpie marker scrawls out four numbers on our arms, we are made to do this to ourselves, it is the number of our training platoon. After a few hours of mind numbing paperwork, we are led with our paper bags to an assembly line type of room, where the "Corps will give us everything we need."

We are stripped down to our underwear. Everything goes in the paper bag in front of us. In further reinforcement that we are, indeed, now "lower than whale shit" we are not permitted to write our name on our bag, instead we write the last four digits of our social security number. Next, we are "right-faced" and we proceed through the assembly line, packages of t-shirts, underwear, socks, and camouflage "utility" uniforms. The sizing is done in an instant, one does not dare speak out if the size of something seems ludicrously out of proportion to one's frame, one just hopes that they err on the side of larger versus smaller. The only true concern allowed is whether our boots fit properly, other than that, ambivalence.

After receiving a mountain of new clothing, we are marched back outside to our paper bags where we are forced to remove the last vestige of our civilian identities, our underwear, placing them in the paper bag before sealing them up. We take our first tentative ascent into the warrior identity, trying it on as we put on our new uniforms, our new boots, our new warrior underwear. However, one last identity stripping ritual awaits us, our haircuts.

We are marched into a barber shop where we are completely denuded of our hair. Now, the number on our forearm makes sense, no longer can we recognize each other, our personal identity has been completely erased within twenty-four hours. The number is our new identity. If, in our dazed and confused state, we wonder where we are supposed to stand or be, we look to each other's forearm to find our tribe, our new identity. Our death is complete; we are now ready to begin the painful rebirthing process.

One gets to meet their new father, their ritual elder who, with his warrior assistants, will initiate us into the mysteries of the warrior, in the late afternoon of the third day, being deemed fit to begin training. "Dad," the senior drill instructor (SDI), gives us a nice speech as he lays out his "fair but tough, hard work and fun" doctrine. He then introduces us to "his" drill instructors, they seem disciplined and, if not benign, not the monstrous older brother who beats the shit out you that we will come to identify them as. One begins to think, "yeah, this might be a little tough, but not nearly as bad as I thought it would be." That is a mistake. After introducing his drill instructors, he tells them to "take charge." Immediately our world is chaos, we have a raw, naked encounter with the darkest shadow of psyche, it is right in front of us, screaming, stitching together unintelligible strings of profanity while concurrently acting out extreme violence on every object within their purview, which means everything in our world. Within sixty seconds we are reduced to fear, flight has been taken away as an option, our "asses belong to the Corps" now.

So it begins. Our new warrior identity is slowly shaped and we begin to identify with it. As in the Shamanic initiation, it is in phases and many do not make it to the end. Of our starting 68, 36 will assume the mantle of Marine. The initiations are rigorous. In

the beginning it is an attempt to dismember us physically, constant tests of strength and endurance. The physicality of it claims a few victims, they are recycled or sent home, depending on the severity of their injury. Others cannot meet the physical standards and leave like ghosts, never to be seen again.

The SDI, standing in for the Shaman, leads us into the next phase. We are to learn a new mythology. The new mythology extols the virtuous warrior ethos, holds out the hope that whatever horrors we may be asked to inflict on other human beings, there is a meaning to it, that we are a bit superior to the civilian in that we are willing to sacrifice our lives, if necessary, to save the innocents. If we confront the dragon, we will unhesitatingly slay it, or die trying. We learn of the great heroes of the Corps; Dan Daly, winner of two Medals of Honor, he lived through both, a rarity. Or of "Chesty Puller" who could not wear all of his medals and awards because he did not have enough real estate on his dress tunic. We are asked to try on this new mythology, this new identity; we lose a few more initiates.

We enter a new phase, learning the actual skills of the vocation, we have survived the death, we have learned the first round of spells, we are now asked to learn the next round. We are taught to shoot. How to move in unison, the purpose of all of those crazy drills we had been going through. We have shown the "right stuff," we are almost warriors. In our final phase, we are asked to demonstrate our new skills, prove that we have assimilated the lessons of the Elder Warriors, that we are truly powerful, much like the Shaman interrogating his pupils on the mastery of his spells. We lose a final few in this phase, those who may have had the physical courage and stamina to survive this long but cannot or will not assume their new warrior identity.

We are reborn: we are in our dress uniforms, on the parade deck. There are speeches by high ranking officers, although one does not hear them, we are in our own world. Our Elders have passed judgment and it is good, we are Warriors, Marines now.

The bugle sounds, we come to attention; we march past in review. The call comes to dismiss the troops. Our monstrous older brothers and our "Dad" call us Marines for the first time. We have lost the moniker of recruit, we are no longer "lower than whale shit" we are now "devil dogs."

Our families do not recognize us, we must find them. We collect our brown bags with our civilian clothes in them. We look at them like an archaeologist would look at ancient ruins, even though it was only a little more than thirteen weeks ago that we discarded our civilian identities like a snake shedding its skin. None of us changes into civilian clothes. We are Warriors, we have survived a death and dismemberment, assimilated our lessons, and been reborn; we have paralleled the shamanic initiation. As C. M. Smith (2007) states, we have "intentionally and ritually undergone the deep dismembering and transformative process…in that transformative or death/rebirth experience the shaman learns what he or she fundamentally is" (p. 64). We have learned that we are Warriors, Marines.

My Wars

The military gave me a substitute for killing my physically abusive father; I joined the Marines right out of high school, three years later I was fighting the first of my two wars. Iraqis were the object of my rage now, standing in for my father. The first war is variously known as Desert Storm or Gulf War I. My second is labeled the Iraq War.

After the September 11th events in the United States, I re-entered military service as an intelligence specialist in the United States Naval Reserves. I incorrectly imagined that I would be far removed from a battlefield. As Captain Willard, Martin Sheen's character in *Apocalypse Now* said "everyone gets everything he wants. I wanted a mission, and for my sins, they gave me one. Brought it up to me like room service. It was a real choice mission, and when it was over, I never wanted another" (Coppola, 1979). In fairly short order I found myself being trained as a Special Warfare intelligence analyst and deployed to Iraq at the height of the insurgency during 2005–2006. It was almost fifteen years to the day that I found myself back killing Iraqis, this time with the Navy. This time with a lot more unease at the project of killing people who were no threat to me.

Coming Home

Near the start of the stand-off in Desert Shield, my reserve tank battalion was activated and within two weeks we found ourselves in the desolate sands of the Middle East. The swift and early activation of our unit belies the political classes' chattering that war could still be averted. You do no commit reservists to the front line in anticipation of peace.

As reservists, we were placed on the tip of the spear, leading the charge into Kuwait City for the 6th Marine Regiment. After three months of posturing and three days of ground combat, we found ourselves camped out on the edge of Kuwait City awaiting our rotation home. After almost two months, we headed back into Saudi Arabia to await transport home. A few weeks and one suicide later, we were met on the tarmac

by then Brigadier Boomer (later to become the Commandant of the Marine Corps) who personally shook each of our hands as we got on the plane home.

We changed planes in Bangor, Maine to an emotional welcome home by the locals, then airlifted to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina to spend the night. Two days later our plane dropped us off on the tarmac at Miami International Airport. All of us left directly from the airport into civilian life. It was psychologically jarring: less than 96 hours earlier we had been in hostile territory. Now we were back on the block smoking and joking.

My second experience coming home was not markedly different. There were some minor changes designed to screen us physically and psychologically; that is a short checklist administered by our unit medic 24 hours before leaving Iraq. After that, we were on a plane to Qatar where we had a three day, decompression stop. After boarding a commercial flight to Baltimore, then on to San Diego, the unit arrived about 20 hours after leaving Qatar. Again, we were cut loose at the airport to go on leave. Within two months, most of us were deactivated and back in our civilian lives with no counseling and no real ritual to help us reintegrate.

Aftermath

The military is masterful at activating the warrior energies through the ritual death and rebirth process of boot camp. Unfortunately, there is not a corresponding ritual cleansing of the combat veteran upon his return from a combat tour. Instead, he or she is left to find their own way home: to deal with guilt, boredom, depression, and other maladies of combat. Morally and spiritually, it seems that today's combat veterans are

left in the wilderness to find their own way back. Lifton (1973), speaking about US Vietnam veterans wrote:

> Combat veterans tend to see their experience as an exercise in survival rather than a defense of national values….one undergoes the "ideal" or test without the possibility of that "idea of glory" or "decision of holy validity" there is all of the pain but none of the form. (p. 41)

As in the Vietnam veterans' experience, captured by Lifton above, I sensed that my higher-level warrior was not the force at play in my psyche. The heroic struggle against an invading army is not what I was engaged in. In fact, I realized that I was the dragon rather than the knight and all honor belonged to the enemy:

> Nor could the patrols seeking out an elusive enemy, the ambushes in which Americans were likely to be the surprised victims, or the "search and destroy missions" lashing out at noncombatants achieve the psychological status of meaningful combat ritual….the men were adrift in an environment not only strange and hostile but offering no honorable encounter, no warrior grandeur….Men who fight wars inevitably become aware of the terrible disparity between the romantic views of heroism expressed "back home" and the reality of the degradation and unspeakable suffering they have witnessed, experienced and caused. (Lifton, 1973, p. 38)

Intuitively and instinctually, I was already moving away from the PTSD model espoused by the Veterans Administration (VA) and the clinical psychology community. There was something about their approach that did not resonate with me. Frankly, their explanation lacked soul.

I am still not completely whole from my war experiences, nor will I ever be. From a psychological perspective, my psyche has begun the process of accepting that what I did in those wars was honoring my warrior energy. It is a part of who I am: I cannot escape it. I have had to learn to transcend the physical to the psychical, using the urge to protect and champion in a non-violent way. Perhaps most importantly, for me personally I had to stop denying the warrior in me; to gain peace, I have had to accept that the warrior is a large part of who I am and how I walk in this world.

This work therefore, has sprung from my own psyche's need to integrate the reality of my wars with my own moral and spiritual compass. I would not be in a place to conduct this work without my own experience.

> And, finally, if in my focus on the pain of the killers I do not sufficiently address the suffering of their victims, let me apologize now. "The guy pulling the trigger" wrote Allen Cole and Chris Bunch, "never suffers as much as the person on the receiving end." It is the existence of the victim's pain and loss, echoing forever in the soul of the killer that is at the heart of his pain. (Grossman, 1995, p. xxxiii)

Chapter 4: Relevance of the Topic to Depth Psychology

Hillman (2004) in *A Terrible Love of War* writes:

> Secular models fall short in grasping war's attraction, its cult and our terrible love for it, which occasion "the 'highest' and finest passions humans can know: courage, altruism and the mystical sense of belonging to 'something larger than our selves.'" (p. 76)

With this statement, Hillman invokes the gods, plunging us into a mythological place with raw Titanic appetites and passions inherent in such a place. Hedges (2003) further invokes the mythological:

> The myth of war entices us with the allure of heroism. But the images of war handed to us, even when they are graphic, leave out the one essential element of war—fear. There is, until actual moment of confrontation, no cost to imagining glory….we do not smell rotting flesh, hear the cries of agony, or see before us blood and entrails seeping out of bodies. (p. 83)

Owen (1920/1998) gives us an image through poetry that Hedges alludes to in describing the reality of war. Writing about a soldier that he saw gassed during World War I:

> Dim, through misty panes and thick green light,
>
> As under a sea I saw him drowning.
>
> In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
>
> He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
>
> If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
>
> Behind the wagon we flung him in,
>
> And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood

Come gargling from the froth corrupted lungs,

Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,

My friend, you would tell with such high zest

To children ardent for some desperate glory,

The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est Pro patria mori. (pp. 160–161)

By invoking the gods, Hillman provides clear pointers into the domain of depth and archetypal psychology.

War Reality

In war's planning and initial execution Apollonian thinking pervades: cruise missiles, over-the-horizon targeting (OTH), drones, Naval gunfire, ground attack aircraft, all raining unseen, updated arrows of death upon so-called enemies. These weapon systems reify the image of Apollo's and Artemis' bows in their design and use. These beginning states of war elevate Apollo while seeming to denigrate Ares. The United States military knows it is easier to seduce the public, soldier, sailor or Marine with Apollo rather than Ares: the close gore of death is kept at a distance, the impact on real, individual human beings safely hidden away behind the missile flying out of a launch tube with landing co-ordinates substituted for the image of its human impact. Thus, the militaries of the world switch to more and more indirect fire, more missiles, drones, and artillery. These weapons allow belligerents to increase not only physical space, but psychic space. To my point,

> At the physical distance in which the soldier has to use a non-projectile weapon, such as a bayonet or spear, two important corollaries of the physical relationship come into play. First we must recognize that it is psychologically easier to kill with an edged weapon that permits a long stand-off range, and increasingly more difficult as the stand-off range decreases….The physical range provided by the spears of the Greek and Macedonian phalanx provided much of the psychological leverage that permitted Alexander the Great to conquer the known world. (Grossman, 1995, p. 120)

Glen Slater (2009) concurs: "the consistent aim of projectiles is to distance the shooter and an experience of the underworld" (p. 35).

Culturally, Americans seem to fall for the Siren song of Apollonian war. Take one of our latest "kinetic military action[s]" (Obama, 2012) in Libya. Kinetic is military euphemism for bomb, a chemical reaction that explodes as 500, 1,000 or 2,000 pounds of chemical energy sends metal bomb casings and shock waves ripping through the euphemistic term for a fellow human being—a target. Missouri Representative Ike Skelton (2001) memorialized the use of Apollonian smart bombs in the Congressional Record:

> The Persian Gulf War, 1990-1991….demonstrated the devastating efficacy of high technology weapons like smart bombs, the success of stealth technology, the importance of establishing air supremacy and the advantages of disabling the enemy's infrastructure and command, control and communications capability. (p. 10,494)

Completely missing is the psychological dimension of Ares, the war god of close combat. Instead, there is the fantasy image of a clean war, where only bad guys die in a sudden, bloodless death. As of yet, Ares has not made his appearance, the individual combatants have yet to close the gap, both physically and psychologically. The gore and stench of battle has yet to be seared into every survivor's psyche.

War and Depth Psychology through History and Literature

War, viewed through a depth psychological lens is also prevalent in literature. Jonathan Shay (2002) reads *The Odyssey* through a depth psychological lens as well as an earlier work *Achilles in Vietnam* (Shay, 1994). Similarly, fiction works such as Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929/1982), and *The Road Back* (1931/2013) chronicle World War I and its aftermath through a soldier's eyes. Stephen Crane's (1895/1990) *The Red Badge of Courage* provides an American Civil War perspective. In poetry, Wilfred Owen's (1920/1998) poem *Dulce et Decorum Est* graphically describes the effects of gas and its aftermath on soldiers in the trench.

On a more contemporary basis, *Good Kill* (Amin & Niccol, 2014) follows a drone pilot as he sinks into a moral depression following unending orders day after day to unleash drone strikes on first responders after the initial strike on terrorist targets. *Eye in the Sky* (Sheehan & Hood, 2015) presents the moral dilemma of whether to unleash a drone missile strike to kill suicide bombers, knowing that there is a high probability of civilian deaths. *Sparta: A Novel* by Roxana Robinson (2013) is a modern retelling of *The Road Back* with its theme of the returning war combatant and his struggle to fit back into civilian society. Helen Benedict (2011) tells her story of being in combat from a woman's perspective in *Sand Queen*. *The Hunger Games* (Collins, 2008) chronicle the

moral dilemma of survival of oneself, as well as one's tribe versus the Coliseum Circus fight to the death demanded as tribute.

The point of the preceding is to show that literature, poetry, film, and art have long been used as mediums to highlight the effects or tell the stories of war and its combatants. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all related literature, but rather to highlight that poetry, literature, and film are important to depth psychology and this study. Whether from the ancient *Bhagavada-Gita*, *The Odyssesy*, or more contemporary works of poetry, fiction, and film, they chronicle themes that appear across time and culture.

Chapter 5: Literature Review

Literature Relevant to the Research Topic

The problems of war combatants in United States psychological literature first made its debut in the penultimate diagnostic criteria used to diagnose, the DSM. Its absence from the DSM-II (2nd ed.; DSM-II; American Psychiatric Association, 1952) speaks to either a disinterest, or more probably, a governmental attitude against paying disability pensions or providing free treatment. In particular, in the United States, it was not until after the war in Vietnam that it received any particular attention in the popular culture and even, to a certain extent, within the halls of mental health researchers. Thus, in the United States, the *National Vietnam Veterans' Readjustment Study* (Kulka et al., 1988) is considered the standard starting point for comprehensively examining the effects of war on combatants.

However, pulling the focus of the lens back to a more panoramic view, it is possible to view the outlines of this problem in a much wider historical and human context. It is, in fact, possible to trace the problems of war combatants across a broad vista of time and place starting at the beginning of civilizations both East and West. Phillip Gibbs speaking of World War I veterans provides one such recognition:

> But all was nor right with the spirit of the men who came back. Something was wrong. They put on civilian clothes again, looked to their mothers and wives very much like the young men who had gone to business in the peaceful days before the August of '14. But they had not come back the same men. (1920, p. 547)

Gibbs' more contemporary observation is not the beginning of these observations, however for the history of literature and writing point to this as an enduring problem

across the ages and cultures. We see in the Old Testament of The Bible several allusions to moral trauma. In the *Second Book of Samuel* David's elegy over Saul and Jonathan shows the moral cost of war and what has come to be termed survivors guilt:

> How did the heroes fall
>
> In the thick of battle?
>
> Jonathan, by your dying I too am stricken,
>
> I am desolate for you, Jonathan my brother.
>
> Very dear you were to me,
>
> Your love more wonderful to me
>
> Than the love of a woman
>
> How did the heroes fall
>
> And the weapons of war succumb! (2 Samuel 1, 25:27, The New Jerusalem Bible)

In a similar vein, David is told by Yahweh that he is not allowed to build Yahweh's temple due to the blood on his hands, even though this blood was demanded to be spilled by Yahweh:

> My brothers and my people, listen to me. I have set my heart on building a settled home for the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, for the footstool for our God, but when I was ready to build it, God said to me, "You must not build a house for my name, for you have been a man of war and have shed blood." (1 Chronicles 28, 3)

The foregoing it is out of the Old Testament, but this moral conflict in war is not restricted to this culture alone. Arunja in the *Bhagavad Vita* has a conversation with Krishna about the implications and immorality of prosecuting the battle that is about to be enjoined. As I cover this more extensively in a later section of this literature review, I

will refrain from repeating that here. Suffice it to say that there is a universality that points to the moral aspects of the sequela of war on those who participate.

Summary of Relevant Research Domains

It is appropriate to begin this inquiry by examining, through a historical lens, the current theoretical and psychological frameworks addressing the after-effects of war on combatants. Here, let me stress that by combatants, I mean not just those engaged in actual killing, but those that are considered combatants within the context of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, its antecedent The Hague Conventions of 1917, and customary International Humanitarian Law (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2015). These two agreements along with the customary International Humanitarian Laws generally describe the law of land warfare and make provisions for identifying belligerents (nation states engaged in armed conflict), neutrals (nation states or citizens of those states not engaged in the conflict), combatants (identifiable fighters for a belligerent nation state), prisoners of war and civilians (non-combatant citizens of a belligerent nation state). In addition, they describe what is permissible in terms of targets and treatment of various identified classes of persons. Naval warfare is covered in other conventions and treaties and is not applicable in the context of my use of terms.

Excluded from this study are non-combatant but traumatized persons present in and around any conflict including: civilians, neutrals, spouses or partners of combatants, and so on. The exclusion of these persons from this study is not intended to diminish trauma inflicted or felt by them nor the deleterious effects of war on all peoples

This review begins by following a school of thought, then its historical development over time. Beginning with trauma, I trace it through a depth psychological

lens beginning with Freud, traversing Jung, and finishing with Kalsched. These developmental approaches are examined from the perspective of combat trauma, including applicability critiques.

Following trauma, I examine the literature surrounding World War I, World War II, and Korea, including the concepts of shell shock, war neuroses, and combat exhaustion. Though inter-related, they have very different definitions and implications. Shell shock evokes primarily a sense of physical injury, reifying trauma in its corporeal sense. War neuroses invokes the sense of a psychological injury. This has implications: both for treatment regimens and as diagnostic instruments to deny veterans treatments, pensions or even life itself.

Next, PTSD and the current focus on TBI history is traced. Throughout this section I will show the parallels to the 100 year old arguments for and against the psychological (PTSD) and physical (TBI) explanations with the implications to modern combat veterans. Finally, the review concludes with current literature on moral injury.

Developmental Trauma Literature

Developing a trauma definition. Trauma is a general term with roots indicating a corporeal etiology. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2016), traces the etymology from the Greek τραῦμα (wound) and defines it thusly:

> 1. Pathological. A wound, or external bodily injury in general; also the condition caused by this; traumatism.
>
> 2. Psychoanalytical and Psychiatry. A psychic injury, esp. one caused by emotional shock the memory of which is repressed and remains unhealed; an

> internal injury, esp. to the brain, which may result in a behavioural disorder of organic origin. Also, the state or condition so caused.

From a depth psychological perspective, these definitions remain unsatisfying due to their primary foci on the corporeal and organic. Thus, it is helpful to explore further before settling on a definition that speaks specifically to the combat veteran's non-physical wounds, even if caused, in part, by a physical injury.

Judith Herman (1992) indicates that a traumatic reaction occurs when a person experiences and or witnesses a physical body violation, pain, death, or damage to which no defense or escape seems possible. Thus, Herman confines her definition to a corporeal view; an external stimulus that invokes a fight, flight or freeze response. This view has much in common with the *Oxford English Dictionary's* definition above and both the original and subsequent *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM) constellations that will be reviewed shortly. Laurie Pearlman and Karen Saakvitne (1995) describe trauma as an individual's unique interpretation of an event or ongoing situation that results in a) an impairment of an individual's ability to integrate an overwhelming emotional experience or b) a subjective experience of threat to life, bodily integrity, or sanity. Willem Martens (2005), sensing gaps in Pearlman and Saakvitne, and Herman, proffers this explication of trauma:

> Trauma is an experience that leads to a) involuntary and radical change of a person's internal life; b) emotional, social and eventually moral dysfunction (feelings of loss of old capacities, habits and relationships) because of its intensive, devastating, uncontrollable, profound and long-lasting impact on all internal dimensions of the person's life; and c) restlessness, grief, frustration, and

> paranoid and hostile feeling toward the harsh, unbearable, and threatening outside world. (p. 116)

The above definition approaches a depth psychological perspective. However, these definitions are unsatisfying as they fail to address trauma from a fully depth psychological perspective. For the depth psychological perspective the turn is toward Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud.

Early psychoanalytic theories of trauma: Breuer and Freud. The first completely psychological explanation of a trauma theory began with Breuer and Freud's (1893/1953) *On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena: Preliminary Communication.* In this paper, the authors rejected a neurobiological or molecular (biochemical) approach to the effective study of hysteria. Rather, they introduced a psychological approach to understanding the somatic symptoms of hysterical patients via psychological analysis.

Breuer's understanding was that symptoms of hysteria, apart from stigmata, were determined by certain experiences of the patient operating in a traumatic fashion, which were being reproduced in his or her physical life in the form of mnemic symbols. He posited that a traumatic event resulted in a somatic hysterical response. As a result, this created a dissociative split while in a so-called hypnoid state. Thus, Breuer's approach to treatment involved having the patient remember the scene in which the symptom first occurred, then, replaying the scene in a hypnotic state, he proceeded to remove the symptom by redirecting the psychical course of events through suggestion. There is a connecting thread from Breuer's basic model of trauma and treatment echoed in today's

conceptual PTSD psychodynamic models: this is addressed in the section on the history of PTSD.

Freud's differentiated understanding was that hysterical symptoms in the present are evoked by an unconscious linking of a close-enough image in the now to the repressed trauma event or image: a symbolic representation. He further continues developing this line of thought independently beginning with his next essay on trauma, which is covered shortly. In summary, Breuer and Freud's initial work recognized that current hysterical symptoms were the result of a precipitating traumatic event in the patients' past that had been repressed. This was a significant departure from previous work attempting to prove a genetic predisposition.

With the publication of *The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence* Freud (1894/1953) extended his early work with Breuer by recognizing repression as a defense of the ego: "the splitting of the content of consciousness is the result of an act of will upon the part of the patient" (p. 46). In this work, Freud differentiates between defense hysteria and acquired hysteria, a prescient move to deflect critique from followers of Jean-Martin Charcot's genetic predisposition theory of retention hysteria. Charcot was foremost a neurologist but later began work on hysteria with the hypotheses that it was a neurological disorder with a hereditary predisposition. Charcot later amended his stance and accepted the idea of hysterical symptoms having a psychological basis (Havens, 1966). Having dispatched Charcot, Freud continues with an exposition on defense hysteria.

Freud posited an occurrence of incompatibility in a defense hysteric's ideational life with this incompatible event resulting in a repression by the ego. The ego succeeds

in this repression by turning the powerfully affective idea into a psychical affective charge in the subconscious (Freud (1894/1953, pp. 47-49). Freud described it as "[a] hysterical splitting-off ha[ving] formed at a 'traumatic moment'" (Freud (1894/1953, p. 50). Images associated with the repressed trauma result in an increase of affective charge in the patient, resulting in either obsessive or somatic symptoms.

Freud, while acknowledging Breuer's breakthrough regarding an associative image of the original traumatic event, thought it was too limited. The limitation posited by Freud and later expounded in his writings throughout the mid to late 1890s was that the first scene recalled or recounted when the symptom first appears is often not the true scene or original source. His break from Breuer was the recognition that there exists yet another associative scene different from the one upon which the symptom first appeared. These ideas appeared first in *The Aietology of Hysteria*: "no hysterical symptom can arise from a real experience alone, but that in every case the memory of earlier experiences awakened by association to it plays a part in causing the symptom" (Freud, 1896/1953, p. 197). Freud continues: "the outbreak of hysteria may almost invariably be traced to a psychical conflict arising through an incompatible idea setting in action a defence on the part of the ego and calling up a demand for repression" (Freud, 1896/1953, p. 210).

Freud's final theory of trauma before his abandonment of it in favor of the Oedipus complex rested upon two fundamental principles: first, Freud posited a prepubescent causal trauma and secondly, he stated unequivocally that it involved some sort of forbidden erotic encounter, most often between an adult and the pre-pubescent child (i.e. parent/child, uncle/niece). If the encounter did not occur between adult and child, then it most often involved some sort of incest: brother and sister or between

cousins. Thus, Freud's theory of the trauma behind hysteria is one rooted in repression of forbidden eroticism manifesting itself in adult life. At its core then, Freud's theory of trauma is developmentally based, the result of an interruption in normal development due to a forbidden erotic encounter. This early work laid the groundwork for his dream work and the breakthrough of the Oedipus complex. For a further treatment of this pre-Oedipal sexual explanation see *Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses* (Freud, 1898/1953). Though an important extension, this later work is not covered here due to its inapplicability to the study at hand.

Freud's works here have been covered here for several reasons. First and foremost, Freud is the father, so to speak, of depth psychology. Thus, what he has to say about trauma is important to any dissertation addressing trauma. Just as important, is what Freud's work points out: the trauma itself may have been triggered by an external event, or the sufferer's internalized, or perhaps unconscious, understanding of an event. More importantly, as Donald Kalsched (1996) writing in a contemporary context points out Freud's insight that people tend to re-traumatize themselves over and over about the event or events. A final reason to cover Freud's understanding of trauma, is that his views on the war neuroses were shaped by his understanding of trauma—particularly the unconscious component and the compensatory mechanisms of the psyche.

Trauma in Jung's oeuvre. Due to the radical nature of suggesting sexuality as the basis of hysterical neuroses, Freud's sexual based theory of trauma came under almost immediate attack in the psychiatric communities and congresses across and especially within the German psychiatric community where Freud was not well regarded (Shamdasani, 2011, p. xi). One such attacker was Gustav Aschaffenburg. Jung, due to

Freud's political inability and a temperamental disposition towards defending his theories in these congresses, instead took up a defense of the early trauma theory. Jung's defense of Freud's trauma theory is discussed here due to its importance in the later abandonment of Freud's trauma theory. In addition, Freud's trauma theory frames his subsequent work with war neuroses and embroilment in Julius Wagner-Jauregg's treatment methods during World War I.

In short, Jung modifies, apparently with Freud's permission, Freud's assertion that all neuroses have sexual trauma etiology, restating it as "an indefinitely large number of cases of hysteria derive from sexual roots" (Jung, 1906/1961, p. 12). Adding the "indefinitely large" modifier has great import to Freud's approach to war neuroses later on. Jung continues by refuting Aschaffenburg's charge that psychoanalysis is simply auto-suggestion and points to his association experiments and their decided lack of an auto-suggestive component. Jung also notes that by their very nature the association experiments are repeatable by anyone without much experience or training, but that psychoanalysis is much more contextual and nuanced "since it presupposes an unusual combination of specialized knowledge and psychological routine which not everyone possesses, but which to a certain extent can be learnt" (Jung, 1906/1961. pp. 14-15).

Finally, Jung (1906/1991) notes that a therapeutic outcome is not an indicator as to the soundness of a particular theory or method: "so far as the therapeutic effect of psychoanalysis is concerned, it makes no difference to the scientific rightness of the hysteria theory or of the analytic method how the therapeutic result turns out" (p. 15). What has been endeavored here is to show that Jung has laid the groundwork to, metaphorically, not throw out the baby with the bath water:

> Even a superficial glance at the pages of my work will show how much I have to thank the ingenious conceptions of Freud. . . .I can affirm that in the beginning I naturally made all the objections that are customarily made against Freud in the literature. But I said to myself, Freud could be refuted only by one who had applied the psychoanalytic method many times and who really investigates as Freud investigates. . . . He who does not or cannot do this should not pronounce judgment on Freud, else he acts like those famous men of science who disdained to look through Galileo's telescope. Fairness to Freud does not mean, as many fear, an unqualified submission to a dogma; one can very well maintain an independent judgment. If I, for instance, acknowledge the complex mechanisms of dreams and hysteria, this does not mean that I attribute to the infantile sexual trauma the exclusive importance that Freud apparently does. Still less does it mean that I place sexuality so predominantly in the foreground or even grant it the psychological universality which Freud, it seems, postulates under the impression of the certainly powerful role which sexuality plays in the psyche. (Jung, 1907/1961, p. 10)

From the above, we can deduce that Jung's theory on complexes was heavily influenced by Freud's work. Jung's work on his complex theory, particularly his identification of their autonomous and feeling toned nature is directly relatable to trauma. Jung (1928/1961) himself wrote only one treatise directly on trauma: *The Therapeutic Value of Abreaction*. I will return to this very important essay in the section on war neuroses as it is not only Jung's only essay directly addressing combat trauma, but specifically, it addresses trauma in veterans of World War I. However, before discussing

this essay, it is helpful to provide an overview of Jung's thoughts on trauma and the interconnection with his theory of the complex.

> Complexes are in fact "splinter psyches." The aetiology of their origin is frequently a so-called trauma, an emotional shock or some such thing, that splits off a bit of the psyche. Certainly one of the commonest causes is a moral conflict, which ultimately derives from the apparent impossibility of affirming the whole of one's nature. (Jung 1948/1961, p. 98)

And more definitively:

> a traumatic complex brings about dissociation of the psyche. The complex is not under the control of the will and for this reason it possesses the quality of psychic autonomy. Its autonomy consists in its power to manifest itself independently of the will and even in direct opposition to conscious tendencies: it forces itself tyrannically upon the conscious mind. The explosion of affect is a complete invasion of the individual, it pounces upon him like an enemy or a wild animal. I have frequently observed that the typical traumatic affect is represented in dreams as a wild and dangerous animal – a striking illustration of its autonomous nature when split off from consciousness. (Jung, 1928/1961, p. 110)

Thus, for Jung, trauma resides within the autonomous complexes. This points towards Jung's bias towards a developmental theory of trauma, much as Freud and Breuer before. This critique is developed in more detail after discussing another, more recent theoretician on the nature of developmental trauma.

Trauma and archetypal defense mechanisms. Kalsched (1996) describes the inner world of trauma as a trauma that often occurs in infancy or childhood before a

coherent ego and its concomitant ego defenses are formed. He also posits that a second line of defenses are formed to prevent the unthinkable from being experienced. From this he deduces that an outer event is experienced inwardly. This inward experience is exported outward via the mechanisms of dreams and fantasies. Thus, for Kalsched, the inner experience is a defense against experiencing the outer events which requires an examination of the inner world:

> exploring the inner world help[s] us to explain two of the most disturbing findings in the literature about trauma. The first of these findings is that *the traumatized psyche is self-traumatizing*… The second finding is that *the victim of psychological trauma continually finds himself or herself in life situations where he or she is retraumatized.* (Kalsched, 1996, p. 5)

Kalsched continues on this theme of the self-traumatizing nature of the psyche thusly: "the damage to the inner world is done by the psyche's Yahweh-like rage, directed upon the self. It was for this reason that neither Freud nor Jung were convinced that outer trauma alone was responsible for splitting the psyche" (Kalsched, 1996, p. 17) and

> trauma is not just rupture of the stimulus barrier but is intimately related to "meaning" or psychical reality. *The neurosis develops not in response to the trauma* per se, *but in reaction to the fantasies through which it gets attributed meaning*. (Kalsched, 1996, p. 95)

To this author, these last two quotes point to the differences between depth psychological theories of trauma from PTSD theories, particularly as it pertains to treatment approaches. In addition, Kalsched here is, perhaps unknowingly, providing a

theoretical footing towards more recent movements to label combat veterans as having suffered a moral injury rather than a diagnosis of PTSD.

These three theorists of trauma all rest upon developmental approaches to understanding trauma. While extremely useful for providing a theoretical framework and thus an approach to possible treatment modalities, it seems to this author to lack applicability to victims of trauma who experience the trauma as an adult: specifically, combat veterans. Though one could make the argument that many of the younger combat veterans, say 17-20 something, are still developing psychologically, the placement of the original trauma in infancy through childhood precludes this from being a satisfactory explanation as to what combat veterans experience psychically.

Some troubling aspects of trauma theory as applied to war combatants. One aspect of the sequela of war on its combatants is the troubling reality that some, perhaps the majority, of combatants never experience psychological effects that rise to the level of needing psychological treatment. One explanation, as it relates particularly to special forces types, is the undeniable fact that sociopaths or those who score high normal on diagnostic criteria, can often make ideal soldiers: Pierson (1999) and Stout (2005) make this argument.

Interdisciplinary trauma theory. Charcot and others, understood neuroses, including those stemming from trauma, as having a genetic predisposition. A more nuanced mode of understanding might contemplate genetic, neurobiological, as well as psychological factors. Rachel Yehuda (1999), discusses the current research on biological and neurobiological contributions to a susceptibility to PTSD along with the difficulty in ascribing these factors as contributing factors. Davidson, Hughes, Blaze, and George

(1991) and Bremner, Southwick, Johnson, Yehuda and Charney (1993) theorize that one's own experience of trauma during one's developmental phase may predispose a PTSD response later in life due to the childhood trauma. Breslau, Chilcoat, Kessler, Peterson, and Lucia (1999) found that the type of prior trauma before the presenting trauma, particularly violent assault, is a factor in who might develop PTSD. Breslau et al. (1998) found that the sudden death of a loved one created a moderate risk of developing PTSD.

All of these developmental theories of trauma paved the way for later ideas of trauma and the individual psyche's response to trauma. Though grounded primarily in early events in childhood or adolescence, the theories themselves laid the groundwork for later theories and approaches. At present, there is a recognition in the literature that there may be both physical as well as psychical components that underlie how an individual psyche might react to traumatic events as an adult. Thus, the early developmental trauma models of Freud, Jung and Kalsched have applicability in current research on trauma, PTSD and by extension, moral injury. As such, they are important within the context of this work.

Shell shock and War Neuroses

Shell shock first came into the lexicon of psychoanalysis and psychiatry during World War I (Myers, 1915). However, this was not the first allusion to what became known as war neuroses and shell shock. Jacob Da Costa (1871) identified what he called irritable heart syndrome or soldier's heart based on his work with American Civil war veterans. Edward Tick's Soldier's Heart organization takes its name directly from Da Costa's term. In addition, two contemporary media portrayals use the term in their titles:

(a) *Healing a Soldier's Heart* (Olsson, 2015) a poignant documentary of 4 Vietnam veterans who return to Vietnam with Tick to begin the healing process and (b) Paulsen's (1998) historical novella *Soldier's Heart: Being the Story of the Enlistment and Due Service of the Boy Charley Goddard in the First Minnesota Volunteers.*

Traumatic Neuroses is the title of Hermann Oppenheim's (1884) book that described the post-event symptoms of those who saw major railway and industrial accidents. These beginning recognitions that those who witnessed traumatic events manifested varied, personal and non-normative psychological and psychosomatic symptoms in the aftermath were undisputed. What was disputed, then and to this day, is the organic or psychological roots of the issue. Regardless, these two terms, shell shock and war neuroses, are highly differentiated. They came into general use during and after World War I to describe, diagnose and treat combat related symptoms. There is tension between these two terms and the implications of a diagnosis for each that will be delineated in the next sections.

Shell shock was originally thought to be related to concussive forces creating a lesion on the brain. This parallels the organic or inborn-factor school inasmuch as there is a physical reason for the displayed symptoms. The lesions were thought to either be caused by hereditary predisposition or via the concussive shock of exploding shells in proximity to the presenting patients. This is similar to today's TBI—the assertion that repeated concussive forces of close proximity shells is responsible for personality changes and other combat maladies. See here the early work of Frederick Mott (1919). A further critique and differentiation of TBI from shell shock is outside the scope of this study. It is brought up here to showcase the continuing controversy between the two

different schools of thought that have persisted for over 100 years and its collateral effect on casualty theory and treatment implications.

Returning to shell shock it was soon realized that patients were presenting with the same symptoms as individuals with head injuries without the requisite physical wounds:

> The big artillery battles of December 1914... filled our hospitals with a large number of unscathed soldiers and officers presenting with mental disturbances. From then on, that number grew at a constantly increasing rate. At first, these soldiers were hospitalized with the others ... but soon we had to open special psychiatric hospitals for them. Now, psychiatric patients make up by far the largest category in our armed forces ...The main causes are the fright and anxiety brought about by the explosion of enemy shells and mines, and seeing maimed or dead comrades ...The resulting symptoms are states of sudden muteness, deafness ... general tremor, inability to stand or walk, episodes of loss of consciousness, and convulsions (Gaupp as cited in Ulrich & Ziemann, 1994, p. 102-103)

The Oxford English Dictionary, while noting the term as deprecated, defines shell shock as:

> A disorder identified in soldiers in the First World War (1914–18), attributed to exposure to shell-fire and characterized by severe anxiety and other psychological disturbances, often accompanied by somatic symptoms such as rapid heartbeat and nervous tics. Now chiefly *hist.* (2015)

The continuing use of shell shock to describe the constellation of symptoms exhibited by war veterans was not without controversy. In 1916-1917, British and American medical

authorities attempted to restrict the diagnoses because there was not an obvious somatic injury in presenting combatants. There was also a significant movement within the British medical and command elements to equate shell shock with malingering or cowardice (Crocq & Croq, 2000, pp. 50–51) and (Merriman & Winter, 2006). In this vein, see also Addison (1919) in the preface to Mott's *War Neuroses and Shell Shock* where he summarizes:

> Still, a large number of discharged men suffering from functional disabilities are in receipt of pensions, and Col Mott takes the view that the receipt of a pension suggests permanence of the disability. It is, he points out, a well-established fact that the effective mode of cure of hysterical manifestations is contra-suggestion, and he concludes that every effort should be made to induce such men to take up suitable employment, and that no man should be discharged with a curable functional disability and without the prospect of employment. (p. x)

Here we can see the subtext of not wanting to give a pensionable disability diagnoses to prevent the "spurious" granting of pensions and the long-term implications of caring for the war veteran. Linden, Jones, and Lees (2013) note that Lewis Yealland was also focused on preventing pensions for war neuroses:

> Although Yealland believed in a psychogenic origin for the symptoms of war neurosis, he communicated a physiological illness model to his patients. This approach was harshly criticized by Charles Samuel Myers (1873-1946), consultant psychologist to the British Expeditionary Force in France and editor of the British Journal of Psychology, in a letter published in the Lancet in December (1919). In Myer's view the communication of a somatic illness model to the

> patient was unnecessary and dangerous. By contrast, Yealland feared that by communicating a psychological interpretation, the doctor would give the patient the impression that he was suspected of malingering. Simulation of symptoms would bring society's wrath on the soldier and his family and be a strong disincentive to rehabilitation. (p. 1980)

On the surface, it might seem that Yealland was trying his best for the soldiers, yet he has been roundly criticized: "Yealland has been attacked for his use of electrical stimulation and harsh disciplinary procedures in popular and scientific literature during and after World War I" (Linden, Jones, & Lees , 2013, p. 1976); see Pat Barker's (1991/2013) *Regeneration,* Sebastin Faulks's (1993) *Birdsong* and Elaine Showalter's (1985/1987) *The Female Malady* as examples of critical fiction.

This focus on treating war veterans, not for their longitudinal mental health, but on returning them to the front was not just a British phenomenon however. The Germans and Austrians were also focused on the same end state: returning soldiers to the front and denying pensions for malingerers. Thus, the infamous trial of Julius Wagner von Jauregg and Freud's defense, or, at the very least, mitigation of Jauregg's methods as torture:

> it is also true that we had a people's army, that men were forced into military service, that they were not asked whether they liked to go to war, and that is why one has to understand that people wanted to escape. The physicians had to play a role somewhat like that of a machine gun behind the front line, that of driving back those who fled. Certainly, this was the intent of the war administration. Individual physicians may have coped with this role in different ways. For the medical profession, this was a task really quite unbecoming to its standards. The

> physician should be the advocate of the ill first of all, not that of another. His function is impaired as soon as he starts serving someone else; at the moment he undertook the obligation of rehabilitating people for war duty as quickly as possible, there resulted a conflict for which the medical profession cannot possibly be made responsible. No compromise can be effected between submission to humane values and compulsory military service. (Freud as cited in Gunther & Trosman, 1974, p. xxx)

Thus, Freud's defense of Jauregg can be seen not as a defense of his methods per se but rather an indictment of the warring states. There is also the opportunity to view Freud's defense as an indictment of those psychiatrists in the employ of government and military with the concomitant moral cloud it places them under.

Though reviled in some circles for his testimony and the perception that he whitewashed Juaregg's crimes, Freud did, in fact, indict many doctors, particularly German doctors for the extreme limits of current and voltage use:

> Physicians are glossing over the facts in retrospect when they assert that the strength of electrical current was the same as had always been employed in functional disorders. This would only have been effective in the mildest cases; nor did it fit in with the underlying argument that a war neurotic's illness had to be made painful so that the balance of his motives would be tipped in favour of recovery. (Freud, 1920/1953, p. 213)

Freud also made the succinct argument that malingering is neuroses and war neuroses is malingering: "all neurotics are malingerers; they simulate without knowing it, and this is their sickness. We have to remember that there is a big difference between

conscious refusal and unconscious refusal" (Freud as cited in Gunther & Trosman, 1974, p. xxx).

Though World War I ended in 1918, there was still some residual interest in the medical community in regards to war neuroses. In particular, several distinct lines of inquiry or contention were playing out in the post war period: (a) whether or not war neuroses were simply a form of malingering and the concomitant refusal to compensate veterans or pension them off, (b) the ongoing battle over Freud's sexual component of neurosis, (c) the most effective treatments and the telos of those treatments, and (d) the neurological versus psycho-analytical etiology debate.

Set against this backdrop, the subject of war neuroses was set to be addresed at the Fifth Psycho-Analytical Congress in September 1918. In 1921, the International Psycho-Analytical Press published the papers delivered at the Congress in the book *Psycho-Analysis and the War Neuroses* with an introduction by Freud.

Ferenczi's symposium opens with an argument that the neurologists have embraced psychoanalysis, whether or not they recognize it as such:

> The war has produced an enormous number of nervous disorders which call for elucidation and cure; however, the familiar organic-mechanistic explanation hitherto adopted—which in some ways corresponds the materialistic idea of history in sociology—completely failed. The mass-experiment of the war has produced various severe neuroses, including those in which there could be no question of a mechanical influence, and the neurologists have likewise been forced to recognize that something was missing in their calculations, and this something was again—the psyche. (Ferenczi, 1921, p. 6)

Ferenczi continues by pointing out that the neurologist Adolph Strümpell "asserts that the shock neuroses always develop secondarily and purely psycho-genetically as the result of desire of gain" (Ferenczi, 1921, p. 8). Here, Ferenczi is making two distinct points: (a) most importantly, that Strümpell has indirectly indicated that there is a psycho-analytic component to war neuroses and (b) that Strümpell uses his acceptance of a psycho-analytic component to argue against the patients being pensioned off. Thus, this is a win for Ferenczi as Strümpell, the neurologist, has made his argument for him.

Ferenczi (1921), concurrent with, but not withstanding, then turns implicitly to Freud's sexual theory to describe the symptoms of persons suffering from war neuroses "the entire personality of most of the victims of trauma corresponds therefore to the child who is fretting, whimpering, unrestrained and naughty in consequence of such a fright" (Ferenczi, 1921, p. 19). In this, he obtusely reinforces the notion that sufferers of war neuroses somehow have a weak constitution or are cowards. In this, he concurs with Strümpell inasmuch regarding the pension question. However, he does go on to believe in the potential healing power of recurring anxiety dreams as the "spontaneous attempts of cure by the patient" (Ferenczi, 1921, p. 20).

Thus, Ferenczi acknowledges the power of dreams and the psyche to help war neurotics to become productive members of society again. Ferenczi's main theses are that the science of psychoanalysis cannot be refuted, particularly Freud's. Secondly, that the neurology faction's protestations to the contrary, war neuroses etiologies do not have a strictly neurological or biological basis, but also have a psychoanalytic component.

Simmel's lecture is not sympathetic to the purposes and treatments whose telos was to deliver war neurotics back to the front. Instead, Simmel argues against all forcible

and restrictive methods of treatments "which for the most part produce new psychic injuries" (Simmel, 1921, p. 30). He further argues:

> the frequently observed fact that with the disappearance of the manifest symptom, the neurosis appears in another form, has proved that with all these kinds of palliative measures the root cause of the suffering has not been touched. (Simmel, 1921, p. 30)

This would be in concurrence with Freud's observation that the efficacy of making war neurotics lives so miserable off the front that they would instead heal themselves and return voluntarily to the front is in question:

> Moreover, the success of treatment by a strong electric current, which were brilliant to begin with, turned out afterwards as not to be lasting. A patient, who having been restored to health by it, was sent back to the Front, could repeat the business afresh and have a relapse, by means of which he at least gained time and escaped the danger which was at the moment, the immediate one (Freud, 1919/1953 p. 215)

Simmel had been having some success using a modified form of Freudian psychotherapeutic techniques at a hospital for war neurotics in Posen (see also Lerner 2003, p. 171). Simmel recognized that he had a limited amount of time to work with his patients thus making complete psychoanalysis impossible. Instead, he focused on employing Freud's early techniques, namely hypnosis and examination of the original scene where symptoms began, to help patients achieve a modicum of relief through catharsis. Perhaps most importantly, Simmel appears to be the only doctor to recognize the importance of dreams in war neurotics: "it becomes evident that dream material

directly forces itself on the attention of intelligent psycho-therapists" and "I do not treat any patients whose dreams I do not know" (Simmel, 1921, p. 37).

In the following paragraphs the turn is to Jung's only direct essay on the subject of war neuroses and thus will close out the section on war neuroses and shell shock before turning to the combat trauma theories between World War I and the Vietnam war in America. To start, there is a quick review of the complex theory and then a turn to his essay on war neuroses.

Jung's (1928/1961) theory of the complex is important to understanding his seminal essay addressing war neuroses during and after World War I: *The Therapeutic Value of Abreaction.* In this work, Jung first recounts why Freud's trauma theory fell from favor: the problem of fixing the trauma to a specific trauma and the onset of a neurosis. In his view, the main problem is that one can always trace the traumatic event further back until it is pointing to a pre-natal trauma, thus negating any value placed upon any trauma that happens to coincide with the onset of the neuroses (Jung, 1928/1961, p. 108). Thus, Jung now concludes "these obvious facts, long familiar to any specialist, pushed the trauma theory into the background until, as a result of the war, there was a regular spate of traumatic neuroses" (Jung, 1928/1961, p. 108).

Jung then points out the seemingly obvious: that the trauma theory may have some value inasmuch as the trauma that induces neuroses in the battlefield soldier is seemingly easily identified and thus the Breuer-Freud model of trauma may have applicability to the current problem of war neuroses. Or, he argues, trauma is a complex: "for the trauma is either a single, definite, violent impact, or a complex of ideas and emotions which may be likened to a psychic wound" (Jung, 1928/1961, p. 109). This is

all leading up to Jung's agreement that the single, definite trauma is too simplistic and the fact that an abreaction oriented therapy has some success does not adequately address the philosophy of science problem of underdetermination: the fact that there may be many competing theories that all adequately explain the phenomenon under study and thus, from the evidence, it is impossible to know which theory is correct (Stanford, 2016). Jung however, agrees with William McDougall that a reversion to the Breuer-Freud understanding of trauma as it relates to war neuroses is problematic:

> McDougall has laid his finger on the right spot when he argues that the essential factor is the disassociation of the psyche and not the existence of a highly charged affect and consequently, the main therapeutic problem is not abreaction but how to integrate the disassociation. (Jung, 1928/1961, pp. 109-110)

Jung then points out that McDougall rightly calls into question the value of therapy that emphasizes abreaction (a seeming forerunner to today's PE therapy model) saying "McDougall is also right to point out that in quite a large number of cases abreaction is not only useless but actually harmful" (Jung, 1928/1961, p. 109). He comes to this conclusion by pointing out that if the problem lies, as he agrees with McDougall, in a disassociation, the therapist's job is to help the patient integrate the disassociated contents and that a move towards abreaction can increase the power and autonomy of the complex as the single event is gone over again and again in a misguided attempt to lessen the affect of the singular event.

Though a bit afield from moral injury and PTSD, the primary reason to have covered the above material is that war neuroses and shell shock are intertwined tightly with Freud's theory of trauma and to a lesser extent, Jung. This material also highlights

the fact that many of the same arguments are being raised today were raised over 100 years ago: the unwillingness to acknowledge that there might be both psychological as well as physiological sequela that explain the symptoms of war veterans. Not only that, but the continued fight by governments to privilege physical explanations, by awarding higher percentage disability ratings and more of them while simultaneously downplaying the psychological with less chance of receiving a medical retirement or disability rating. Moreover, today's environment for suffering veterans parallels World War I in many ways: a continued bifurcation with TBI paralleling shell shock and war neuroses sounding very close to PTSD.

Finally, I note that there is very little in the literature of this time that even begins to question the moral, ethical, or religious aspects of serving in a war. This paucity of literature is notable and needs to be highlighted.

World War II and Korea in America: Advent of Combat Fatigue and Exhaustion

Less literature is written about trauma in World War II than World War I. Perhaps it was just a myopic view that somehow, this war would be different. After all, World War II was not trench warfare. However, this optimistic view failed to materialize. Instead, though exhibiting the same exact presenting conditions of the war neurotics of World War I, the psychiatric breakdowns of World War II were labeled combat fatigue, combat exhaustion, or combat stress reaction (Giglio, 1998; Pols, 2011; & Roberts-Pedersen, 2012) and the number of psychiatric casualties were enormous: "during World War II, 504,000 men were lost from America's combat forces due to psychiatric collapse" (Grossman & Siddle, 2010, p. 442). Ray Swank and Walter

Marchand's (1946) seminal study estimated that after 60 days of continuous combat, 100% psychiatric casualties resulted.

In response to the known psychiatric breakdowns during WWI, the US army was looking to reduce the number of psychiatric casualties going into World War II. Harry Stack Sullivan (1892-1949) proposed psychiatric screening and the US army concurred, giving Sullivan carte blanche through the selective service process. His screening process was designed to eliminate those whom psychiatrists thought already exhibited some sort of psychiatric conditions. Ultimately over 2 million men were deemed unfit and not initially inducted (Pols & Oak, 2007). However, as noted by Grossman and Siddle (2010), at one point, there were more psychiatric casualties being shipped home than new recruits rotating into theater. Thus, ultimately, the US army halted the experiment in psychiatric screening and instead, looked to World War I for solutions.

Thus, much like in World War I, the focus became one of rehabilitation near the front and a return to combat in the most expeditious manner possible. Again, the needs of the army for more bodies overcame any real concern for the longitudinal mental health of war combatants: see Bartemeier, Kubie, Menninger, Romano, and Whitehorn (1946) and Kentsmith (1986). The issues of medical pensions for combat exhaustion or post-service sequela never disappeared, echoing forward from World War I. Most voices were against pensioning or unemployment benefits: instead, the focus shifted to training, college and home ownership benefits. Though an unemployment benefit was included in the original GI bill, less than 20% of eligible veterans took advantage of it (Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.).

The Korean War veterans have even less specific literature in the record than World War II veterans. Purely speculatively, perhaps this is because the start of hostilities began so soon after World War II or perhaps because the scale of the war was much smaller and thus affected a much smaller population of war combatants. Whatever the reason, the literature tends to conflate the two: see Sutker and Allain (1996); McCranie and Hyer (2000); Sutker, Winstead, Galina, and Allain (1991); and Richardson, Long, Pedlar, and Elhai (2010).

Thus, in closing this section, the literature record indicates that many of the same observations, symptoms, aims of treatment and controversies carried over from World War I through the Korean War. The focus was not so much the identification of trauma and its long-term sequela and treatment, but rather the relentless focus of the various war cabinets on returning men to the front line as quickly as possible. In the next section, we turn to the US and psychological community's response to Vietnam veterans and their successful agitation for long term treatments and help coping with the sequela of their combat experience.

PTSD

The first official diagnosis of PTSD was introduced with the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (3rd ed.; DSM-III; American Psychiatric Association, 1980). What characterized this shift in diagnostic criteria was the undeniable scale of human experience—a view that trauma required a different, external stressor that was distinct from ordinary life stressors; in order to receive a diagnosis, the patient, by definition, had to have some externally induced trauma: whether rape, war, natural disaster, etc. (Friedman, n.d.).

The road to a PTSD diagnosis was not a smooth one. Indeed, were it not for Vietnam Veterans Against the War's rap groups bumping into psychiatrists Chaim Shatan and Robert Jay Lifton, the dropping of any reference in DSM-II (2nd ed.; DSM-II; American Psychiatric Association, 1952) and a reintroduction in DSM-III (3rd ed.; DSM-III; American Psychiatric Association, 1980) probably would not have happened. Ben Shephard describes the ensuing battles within the culture, politics, veterans' organizations and psychiatry in detail (2001, pp. 355-368). Of particular note was the treatment of Vietnam veterans by the premier veterans' organizations of the time: the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. The fact that these were not Congressionally declared wars meant that by their charters and rules the Korean and Vietnam war veterans were originally prohibited membership Hudson (2013) and Reza (1998). As noted by these two articles, the VFW is still dominated by World War II vets—with their concomitant focus on their war. Shephard (2001) speaks to this specific difficulty of the returning Vietnam veteran.

It was the big tent approach to PTSD that allowed it into the DSM (Shephard, 2001). PTSD diagnosis is not confined just to war veterans: rape victims and industrial accident victims (the so called train wreck syndrome observed by those studying war neuroses) are all included in this category. For perspective on rape and PTSD, see the work of Foa, Steketee, and Rothbaum (1989) and Foa, Rothbaum, Riggs, and Murdock (1991) for an entre into this oeuvre. Non-combat related PTSD is not covered here due to the inapplicability to the topic at hand. However, it is important to note the broader context of the diagnosis and how a non-specific trauma definition made it into the DSM.

PTSD, to this day, is the dominant diagnoses of returning war veterans. A search of the Veterans Administrations sponsored *Published International Literature on Traumatic Stress* database (PILOTS) shows 1,951 peer reviewed journal articles on PTSD since 1990. The number of these articles has risen sharply since the onset of the current conflicts in Afghanistan and especially Iraq. A search for TBI results in an additional 1,001 peer reviewed journal articles. In these two searches, we can see, once again, the continued conflict with the research between the biological and psychological diagnoses of war veterans. Keane and Miller (2012) explicitly call out this bifurcation of understanding and classification:

> Our ultimate understanding of the impact of psychological trauma on the human condition, to include its biological and psychological substrates, is premised on the use of a common definitional framework across scientific and clinical venues. From a historical perspective, great progress in the field was stimulated by the inclusion of the diagnosis of PTSD in the psychiatric nomenclature in 1980 and by several attempts to strengthen the operational criteria employed to define cases and non-cases of people exposed to a traumatic event. (p. 54)

Regardless of the ongoing debate between the biological or psychological basis for the sequela of war, there has recently been a turning towards a new understanding in the literature since the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Litz (2007) states that each war has its own unique phenomenology: "it is incumbent on social and clinical scientists to appreciate the unique phenomenology, demands, and contexts of each new conflict to maximize the validity of research questions and policy recommendations" (p. 217). This is echoed in Keane and Miller's (2012) "Future Classification in

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder" and Roger Brooke's "An Archetypal Perspective for Combat Trauma" (2012).

Though the history of PTSD diagnosis is relatively brief, as the larger literature on war trauma suggests, PTSD is the current construct used to describe the ongoing psychological effects of war.

Moral Injury

Throughout the previous literature, one of the things explicitly not discussed is the concept of morality, spirituality and ethics as it relates to combat veterans. The discussed literature, until the post-Vietnam, area was focused almost exclusively on returning psychological casualties to the front line in the most expedient manner possible. This focus changed direction with the introduction of PTSD and its concomitant focus on treating the longitudinal mental health of war combatants, at least in the United States. Recently, there is a new framework being explored: moral injury.

Though relatively new in the psychological literature, older texts have chronicled this concept for thousands of years. Perhaps the most explicit of these texts is *The Odyssey:*

> Now you are burnt out husks, your spirits haggard, sere,
> Always brooding over your wanderings long and hard,
> Your hearts never lifting any joy—you've suffered far too much (Homer, trans. 1996, 10:502).

Here Homer is speaking to all of Odysseus' men, a warning of sorts that the suffering in war has scrubbed their hearts of joy. This passage intimates at the core problem of returning combat veterans to civilian life, but does not point to any explicit way back. However, earlier, the path was intimated:

But don't refuse the goddess' bed…

But have her swear the binding oath of the blessed gods

She'll never plot…to harm you, once you lie there naked—never unman you…

(Homer, trans. 1996, 10:310-10:34)

The implied remedy then, is to drop the hyper-masculine warrior persona and be psychologically naked to the feminine. However, this is not an easy task. Moreover, the feminine can be dangerous—particularly if we examine the goddesses that Odysseus and his warriors encounter on the way home. Calypso will trick you onto a raft, then drown you. Clytemnestra will betray you with assassins. Eurycleaia can get you accidentally killed by seeing through your disguise. Nausicaa will hand you over to be beaten or killed by strangers. Circe might castrate you or turn you into a pig. The Sirens fill your mind with obsessions to the exclusion of eating, resulting in death via starvation. Scylla, will simply eat you alive. Helen, that most beautiful woman, is the one who involved you in war in the first place.

The feminine, Homer informs, can be dangerous, but you need to risk it, as Odysseus risks all in reclaiming his wife and his great hall. The key is to try, to let go of the battle:

Must you have battle in your heart forever?

The bloody toil of combat?

Old contender,

Will you not yield to the immortal gods?

That nightmare [Scylla] cannot die,

Being eternal evil itself—horror, and pain and chaos;

> There is no fighting her. (Homer, trans. 1990, 12:126)

The nightmare cannot die, cannot be fought with martial skills. The reclamation of the whole is what the warrior needs. In the next sections, I examine the literature of moral injury from multiple perspectives.

Moral injury in the psychological literature. This move back towards interiority and away from a specific, externally viewed trauma sets the stage for the final section of this literature review: namely the concept of moral injury or the potential for moral injury co-morbid with PTSD.

Though there is a rich history of moral injury both in literature and theological contexts, in the psychological literature it is a relatively new phenomenon. Peter Marin (1981) seems to be the first modern look at the concept of moral pain (rather than injury). He states:

> Time magazine's cover story on the vets this past summer is typical of the response. It portrayed the vets as victims of the society that sent them to war, and said that the solution to their problems was increased acceptance and gratitude here at home. Left unsaid in such analyses are two crucial aspects of the vets' suffering that no one seems to want to confront. The first seems to me to be the unacknowledged source of much of the vets' pain and anger: profound moral distress, arising from the realization that one has committed acts with real and terrible consequences. And the second is the inadequacy of the prevailing cultural wisdom, models of human nature, and modes of therapy to explain moral pain or provide ways of dealing with it. (p. 68)

He continues:

> Reading through the literature on the vets, one notices again and again the ways in which various phrases and terms are used to empty the vets' experience of moral content, to defuse and bowdlerize it. Particularly in the early literature, one feels a kind of madness at work. Repugnance toward killing and the refusal to kill are routinely called "acute combat reaction," and the effects of slaughter and atrocity are called "stress," as if the clinicians describing the vets are talking about an executive's overwork or a hysterical housewife's blood pressure. Nowhere in the literature is one allowed to glimpse what is actually occurring: the real horror of the war and its effect on those who fought it. (p. 72)

This seminal work was at odds with the prevailing attitudes of the times, as Marin chronicles throughout the rest of the article.

Litz et al. (2009) were the first in the VA mental health system, under the auspices of the National Center for PTSD in Boston, to propose a name and a framework different from PTSD. They proposed a new theory to describe the issues veterans have dealt with after time in a combat zone:

> Service members are confronted with numerous moral and ethical challenges in war. They may act in ways that transgress deeply held moral beliefs or they may experience conflict about the unethical behaviors of others. Warriors may also bear witness to intense human suffering and cruelty that shakes their core beliefs about humanity. What happens to service members who are unable to contextualize or justify their actions or the actions of others and are unable to successfully accommodate various morally challenging experiences into their knowledge about themselves and the world? Are they at risk for developing long-

> lasting psycho-bio-social impairment? Is there a distinct syndrome of psychological, biological, behavioral, and relational problems that arises from serious and/or sustained morally injurious experiences? Or, do existing disorders, such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sufficiently explain the sequelae of what we term moral injury. (p. 696)

Drescher et al. (2011) followed with a paper addressing the usefulness of using the term moral injury in the combat veteran context:

> Until recently, it had been assumed that the chief cause of post-combat mental health problems was life-threat trauma and to a lesser degree war-zone traumatic loss(es). Although recognized extensively in historical literature (e.g., Shay, 1995), and descriptive accounts (Grossman, 2009), there has been renewed interest in the emotional, spiritual, and psychological wounds that stem from the ethical and moral challenges that warriors face in combat, especially nontraditional forms of combat, such as guerilla war in urban environments. (p.8)

The above papers focus on a rather narrow definition of what constitutes moral injury. Rather than expanding the definition to the psycho-spiritual morality of war in general, they concentrate instead on the guilt associated with doing something unethical or not stopping an unethical activity (guilt by omission or inaction). From a clinical perspective this might make sense. However, other, related fields, such as theology, philosophy and ethics ask the larger questions about the morality of war. From the definitions above, the individual's moral dilemma is framed only in the context of doing or not doing something within the war zone. Not addressed is the notion whether war itself is immoral; then, just the act of participation in war itself can setup ongoing psychological distress. Warren

Kinghorn (2012) describes moral fragmentation from a theological perspective. Jacob Farnsworth (2014) uses a lens of mytho-poetics to examine the male, veteran psyche. Brock and Lettini (2012) use four veteran's self-told stories to highlight the morally deleterious effects of war and the violation of these veterans' sense of moral code.

Perhaps the most interesting move in moral injury literature, is the shift of locus from the seeing experience, i.e. the seeing of the atrocity component of PTSD to an interior feeling of violation, a switch from the "I saw" to the experiencing subject, from the outer representation of atrocity to the internal world of the experiencer. This move tracks with the historical view of combat distress: one of grappling with one's soul and moral compass, both to justify personal participation as well as dealing with the aftermath:

> the sacrifice that citizens make when they serve in their country's military is not simply the risk of death, dismemberment, disfigurement and paralysis….they risk losing the sense that human virtues are still possible. These are psychological and moral injuries—war wounds. (Shay, 2002, p. 33)

Shay and Tick are perhaps two of the most prominent therapists to embrace the idea of a moral injury in combat veterans. Tick (2005), the leading proponent of understanding of war combatants injuries outside of the constraints of PTSD says:

> The common therapeutic model, that is, misses the point that PTSD is primarily a moral, spiritual, and aesthetic disorder—in effect, not a *psychological* but a *soul* disorder. All of its aspects concern dimensions of the soul, inasmuch as the soul is the part of us that responds to morality, spirituality, aesthetics, and intimacy.

> Such aspects can be healed only by strategies aimed at them directly in this context. (p. 108)

The preceding provides a new context towards the evolving psychological understanding that PTSD, by itself, does not adequately address or describe the whole constellation of the after-effects of war on the veteran.

War, morality, and soul in a theological context. The opening verses of the *Bhagavad Gita* begins a poignant journey into past moral dilemmas a warrior faces upon taking the battlefield. In the scene, Arunja places himself, his chariot (with Krishna, his charioteer but also the lord of lords in disguise) on the battlefield between two groups of belligerents right before the battle is to be joined. Arunja is arrayed on one side facing his enemies on the other.

> Krishna, Krishna,
> Now as I look on
> These my kinsmen
> Arrayed for battle,
> My limbs are weakened,
> My mouth is parching,
> My body trembles,
> My hair stands upright,
> My skin seems burning,
> The bow Gandiva
> Slips from my hand,
> My brain is whirling

Round and round,

I can stand no longer:

Krishna, I see such

Omens of evil (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1944, p. 33)

Here, it is clear that Arunja is not a coward cringing from battle. Nor, based on personal experience, is he experiencing anything out of the ordinary. Instead, Arunja is pointing towards a problem with his psyche and the concept of war, for he continues:

How can I care for

Power or pleasure,

My own life, even,

When all these others,

Teachers, fathers,

Grandfathers, uncles,

Sons and brothers,

Husbands of sisters,

Grandsons and cousins,

For whose sake only

I could enjoy them

Stand here ready

To risk blood and wealth

In a war against us?

Knower of all things,

Though they should slay me

How could I harm them….

Tell me how can

We hope to be happy

Slaying the sons

Of Dhritarashtra?

Evil they may be,

Worst of the wicked,

Yet if we kill them

Our sin is greater (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1944, pp. 34-35)

Here Arunja is seeing the possible consequences of engaging in this battle. Pointing towards the anguish that his soul will feel, having committed the sins of "slaying the sons" of another.

In the Western, New Testament tradition, the development of just war theory started with Saint Augustine's use of the phrase in *The City of God* (426/2009, XIX, 21) and was developed extensively by Saint Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologica* (1485/1948). This work points to a need to justify war on moral and theological grounds. Currently, the Catholic church canonizes Aquinas' thinking in its catechism:

> As with all moral acts the use of force to obtain justice must comply with three conditions to be morally good. First, the act must be good in itself. The use of force to obtain justice is morally licit in itself. Second, it must be done with a good intention, which as noted earlier must be to correct vice, to restore justice or to restrain evil, and not to inflict evil for its own sake. Thirdly, it must be

> appropriate in the circumstances. An act which may otherwise be good and well motivated can be sinful by reason of imprudent judgment and execution.
>
> In this regard Just War doctrine gives certain conditions for the legitimate exercise of force, all of which must be met:
>
> 1. the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
>
> 2. all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
>
> 3. there must be serious prospects of success;
>
> 4. the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition. (Catholic Church, 2000 , para. 2307–2317)

Clearly, in the Catholic tradition, there would be no need to develop a just war theory or explain Christian obligation to participate in war, if there was not a moral code prohibiting participation under some circumstances. Thus, there is a moral code that can be injured, either psychically, spiritually, or theologically.

Currier, Drescher, and Harris (2014) take up spiritual functioning in combat veterans with a diagnosis of PTSD where they found lower than normal spiritual functioning. The normal instrument for assessing spiritual functioning is the brief multidimensional measure of religiousness and spirituality (BMMRS) a 40-item scale developed to assess twelve dimensions of spirituality in behavioral health research with religiously heterogeneous groups" (Kopacz, Currier, Drescher, & Pigeon, 2016). This research and the dimensions articulated were developed as a project under the auspices of

the Fetzer Institute and the National Institute on Aging. The attempt was to bridge the gap between religious and spiritual orientation, practice, attitudes and resiliency in the face of traumatic or potentially traumatic experiences such as sudden death of a loved one, veterans, or those with terminal illnesses looking at both physiological health as well as psychological coping.

> The working group identified the following key domains of religiousness/spirituality as essential for studies where some measure of health serves as an outcome. In addition, these domains were chosen because of the strength of their conceptualization and theoretical or empirical connections to health outcomes.
>
> Daily Spiritual Experiences
>
> Meaning
>
> Values
>
> Beliefs
>
> Forgiveness
>
> Private Religious Practices
>
> Religious/Spiritual Coping
>
> Religious Support
>
> Religious/Spiritual History
>
> Commitment
>
> Organizational Religiousness
>
> Religious Preference (Fetzer Institute, 2003/1999, p. 4)

Christopher Ellison (1991) posits that subjective states of self-reported well-being can be influenced by spiritual or religious factors. Ellen Idler (1987) found lower rates of depression or other forms of psychological distress among those with strong religious or spiritual practices and support systems. Tick (2014) recounts the many ritual cleaning ceremonies found in Numbers:

> We are taught that we must purify after sinning, touching a corpse, or direct exposure to the dying. For this our ancestors dictated the Red Cow Ceremony, a weeklong purification ritual that used ashes, burning herbs, and sacred water and that entailed the sacrifice of a rare and never-yoked red heifer. (p. 196)

He continues by pointing out that Deuteronomy 20 is an entire chapter on what might be considered just war theory in the Old Testament. As documented in a previous section, David was prevented from building the Temple due to the blood on his hands from war. Tick (2005) states that war, spirituality and religion are bound up together:

"War and religion have been linked since the beginning of time. Each is a primary expression of our relations with each other, the cosmos, and the Divine" (pp. 269-270). Perhaps more importantly, Tick dedicates a chapter in two different books to show the relationship between war, spirituality and religion and how our religions and mythologies are bound inexorably with war and our moral response to fighting in those wars.

The morality of war from a peace movement perspective. William James (1910/2011) wrote, "History is a bath of blood. The Iliad is one long recital of how Dimodes and Ajax, Sarpedon and Hector killed. No details of the wounds they made is spared us, and the Greek mind fed upon the story" (p. 4).

Further:

> The military party denies neither the bestiality nor the horror, nor the expense; it only says that these things tell but half the story. It only says that war is *worth* them; that, taking human nature as a whole, its wars are its best protection against its weaker and more cowardly self, and that mankind cannot *afford* to adopt a peace economy (James, 1920/2011, p. 12).

James is setting the stage for his main argument, that until there is a moral equivalent of war, the militarists will capture the public's attention and feed that energy into setting the stage for the next war. To wit:

> So long as anti-militarists propose no substitute for war's disciplinary function, no *moral equivalent* of war, analogous, as one might say, to the mechanical equivalent of heat, so long they fail to realize the full inwardness of the situation (James, 1920/2011, p. 13).

Hillman (2004) would concur that there appears to be an inevitability towards war, a terrible love unless humanity can embrace a new set of gods. I would posit though, that what seems missing from modern, Western society, apart from joining the military, is an initiation into adulthood. "I spoke of the 'moral equivalent' of war. So far, war has been the only force that can discipline a whole community, and until an equivalent discipline is organized, I believe that war must have its way" (James, 1910/2011, p. 18). The missing connector in James' view is the way the military and war disciplines the community for the greater good. He further reinforces that he is looking for some sort of initiation for young people, though he does not articulate it in those terms.

> If now—and this is my idea—there were, instead of military conscription, a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of

> years a part of the army enlisted against *Nature,* the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would follow. (James, 1920/2011, p. 17)

As an idea, this has been implemented to a certain degree in the United States via the Americorp program. One could criticize the declaring of war against Nature (and here it seems to me, Nature represents the natural world rather than the philosophical) as being fairly close to declaring war, just on non-humans. However, James' arguing some moral and ethical activity must take the place of war in order to channel human energy into something more productive. By implication, he makes the case that war itself is immoral and destructive to the human soul.

Herman Hesse (1918/1971), who suffered greatly from being ostracized from his fellow German language writers, publishers and public officials for his criticism of World War I echoes, to a large degree, James. First, he acknowledges the power of war over peace in human nature:

> Undoubtedly those who call war the primordial and natural state are right. Insofar as man is an animal, he lives by struggle, he lives at the expense of others, whom he fears and loathes. Life then is war. "Peace" is much harder to define. Peace is neither an original paradisiacal state nor a form of coexistence by mutual consent. Peace is something we do not know; we can only sense it and search for it. (p. 57)

He then moves to criticize those people who plan and execute wars, rather than move towards trying to find peace. Specifically, how alchemy has been perverted. "Out of alchemy, which began as a path to the purest mysticism and the ultimate fulfillment of

the "Thou shalt not kill," we have, with smiling arrogance, created a science and technology that manufacture explosives and poison gases" (p. 58).

Throughout his work *If the War Goes On…* Hesse addresses the "Thou shalt not kill" commandment and the moral implications of that on the individual soul. Unlike James, who prescribes mandatory work instead of military service, Hesse (1914/1971) prescribes an inward turn:

> There has always been war, ever since the earliest human destinies known to us, and there was no reason on the eve of this one for the belief that war had been done away with. Such a belief was engendered only be the habit of a prolonged peace. There shall be war until the majority of human beings are able to live in the Gothean realm of the human spirit. (p. 14)

The preceding section attempts to show the critical perspective of war. In particular, it lays out the important argument that war, from these authors' perspective is inevitable, unless something else can be substituted for the fervor and propaganda resulting in Othering. From this perspective, there needs to be an equivalent, what economists would call a substitutable good for war. Dwight Eisenhower (1961), in his famous farewell address warned of the military industrial complex, which has significant import not only for this section, but Smedley Butlers warning pre-World War II covered in the next section.

Ethics and morality of war from the perspective of the war veteran. Smedley Butler (1935/2003), one of the most decorated US Marines in its 242 year history denounced war after his retirement into civil life. After his retirement, he became active in the many year fight to get the US government to pay the promised $1,000 war bonus

due World War I veterans. During the thirties, he again saw war clouds gathering and wrote *War is a Racket* in an attempt to keep America out of the brewing war:

> Out of war nations acquire additional territory if they are victorious. They just take it. This newly acquired territory promptly is exploited by the few - the selfsame few who wrung dollars out of blood in the war. The general public shoulders the bill.
>
> And what is this bill?
>
> This bill renders a horrible accounting. Newly placed gravestones. Mangled bodies. Shattered minds. Broken hearts and homes. Economic instability. Depression and all its attendant miseries. Back-breaking taxation for generations and generations.
>
> For a great many years, as a soldier, I had a suspicion that war was a racket; not until I retired to civil life did I fully realize it. (p. 18)

The "horrible accounting" Butler describes is one of two major, immoral things that he outlines in this essay. The primary racket he refers to, is how rich the very few become at the expense of those mangled bodies, broken hearts and shattered minds:

> It has been estimated by statisticians and economists and researchers that the war [World War I] cost your Uncle Sam $52,000,000,000. Of this sum, $39,000,000,000 was expended in the actual war period. This expenditure yielded $16,000,000,000 in profits. That is how the 21,000 billionaires and millionaires got that way. This $16,000,000,000 in profits is not to be sneezed at. It is quite a tidy sum. And it went to a very few. (p. 25)

That this war profiteering was considered immoral is not just Butler's opinion, but is backed up by the US Senate's Nye investigation into war munition companies pushing the US into war:

> The so-called "Senate Munitions Committee" came into being because of widespread reports that manufacturers of armaments had unduly influenced the American decision to enter the war in 1917. These weapons' suppliers had reaped enormous profits at the cost of more than 53,000 American battle deaths. (US Senate, n.d.)

Apart from Butler's (1935/2003) warning, what follows are quotes from veterans about the extreme moral issues and soul loss they experienced from their time in war. This veteran points to the suspension of morality and ethics while still clinging to what little part of his soul he could:

> I just did what I had to. I saw all that stuff day after day and wondered how man could be so inhumane, but that little flicker of light was always in my heart, and I clung to it. (Schroeder & Dawe, 2007, p. 9)

This officer in Vietnam asks:

> Can you imagine? Can you imagine sipping tea in a man's living room while you pay him for killing his child? Try to imagine the situation reversed. What's the life of your child worth? What's adequate remuneration for a loving spouse blow to bits by a 40mm cannon round? (Schroeder & Dawe, 2007, p. 157)

Another Vietnam veteran states:

> The moral anguish of the war in Vietnam presented a new challenge to those who fought. Many found that there was NO EXIT. Even after coming home, the war

> stayed in our heads, our hearts, in our horrific dreams, in our loss of sensitivity, and in our difficulties in interpersonal relationships. (Brock & Lettini, 2012, p. 55)

An Iraq veteran remembers:

> How could I ever teach my daughter right from wrong when I had done so wrong myself? What moral authority did I have left be a good father? As our time in Iraq continued and I become more and more preoccupied with the single task of surviving, these issues concerned me less and less. But now, at the door of Samantha's home, they all came flooding back to me. (Brock & Lettini, 2012, p. 61)

Finally: "one soldier back from Afghanistan wrote on his deployment questionnaire, 'I have a moral injury, a betrayal of what is right'" (Tick, 2014, p. 93).

The preceding quotes, of course, are not all inclusive, nor were they intended to be. Rather, they point towards something other than the PTSD diagnosis codified in the DSM. They point towards a moral dilemma, a moral injury.

War, morality, and soul in fiction. Moral injury in war combatants can also be intuited in a wide variety of fiction. For example, Odysseus in *The Odyssey* struggles to find his way home. When he reaches there, he succumbs to a disturbing fit of rage and, with his son, slaughters all the suitors and collaborators in his great hall. Shakespeare's (1997) Henry V is redolent of the moral implications of going to war: "I am afeared there are few die well that die in battle; for how can they charitably dispose of anything when blood is their argument" (Henry V 4.1.6). Stephen Crane's (1895) *Red Badge of Courage* chronicles young Henry Fleming's flight from battle and the morality thereof.

Erich Maria Remarque's (1929) *All Quiet on the Western Front* chronicles the impotence and moral questioning of World War I enlisted men while *The Road Back (1931)*, follows the same cohort home as they struggle to fit their experience into a meaningful context in a now alien civilian world. Ernest Hemingway's (1929) *A Farewell to Arms,* sees the protagonist deserting the Italian army during World War I to avoid a firing squad, later reuniting with his love interest in Switzerland. Thus, across the milieu, story is also used to chronicle a readily identified human and moral dilemma of war.

Conclusion

The above sections point out the universal questioning of the morality of war across both cultures and time from a number of lenses. The lenses chosen: psychology, theology, philosophy, literature, poetry and fiction are used to show that the effects on war combatants are well chronicled, regardless of the lens one chooses to view them through. These moral implications highlight the use of the term moral injury to describe at least some of the returning war veterans' symptomology and suffering.

Chapter 6: Methodology

This author used a hermeneutic methodology to examine the poetry of combat veterans. While hermeneutics is the methodology in this proposed study, it is not focused on what Norbert Henrichs would call general hermeneutics (Palmer, 1969, p. 153). Rather, it focuses in the philological region. Thus, this paper will not address the larger, fuller literature that focuses on the modern era of general hermeneutics starting with Frederich Schleiemacher (1764–1834), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002), and Paul Ricouer (1913–2005). Though their work is important to hermeneutics from the general sense, they have less applicability within the contexts of this study.

This section begins with a brief overview of hermeneutics, followed by a brief background on the importance of understanding depth psychology's roots in German romanticism, poetics and hermeneutics. This is followed by an explication of why poetry and how it fits into this work with a particular emphasis on how it pertains to depth psychology and hermeneutics. Finally, it concludes with the methods and procedures section.

Background

Hermeneutics. Hermeneutics has roots in both philosophy and theology: "biblical and philological hermeneutics arose out of the practical need for methods and rules for the proper interpretation of ancient texts" (Palmer, 1969, p. 154). This perspective resides primarily in the philological or theological regions and concerns itself in the rules and methodologies of interpreting the meaning of a text. Regional hermeneutics, in general, do not concern themselves with a more general perspective;

rather, they are focused within broad regions of hermeneutic inquiry such as philological, allegorical, religious or philosophical. This approach is distinct from the more general approach which came about from Friedrich Scheleiermacher's and later with Wilhelm Dilthey's extension of his work (Palmer, 1999). This work locates this methodological approach in the philological region of hermeneutics, not in the broader general hermeneutics.

Within the philological perspective, there is a focus on three different taxonomies of understanding: the Socratic dialectic, the Hegelian dialectic and the Reductionist dialectic (Butler, 1998). The Socratic dialectic is based on question and answer, with an openness towards the unknown: see Malcolmson and Myers (1994), Randsell (2000), and P. C. Smith (2005). The Hegelian dialectic works towards a proper interpretation by contrasting what is being studied or questioned with its antithesis; a conversation between competing views to arrive at an interpretation. This methodology is used extensively in theology as well as political-economics, particularly in relation to Marxist critiques of capitalism. For theological examples see Min (2004) and Sekerci (2017). Rockwell (2013), Pavlidis (2010), or Monga (2012) exemplify Marxist approaches to a Hegelian dialectic. For this work, however, the focus is on the reductionist dialectic as expounded by Ricoeur (1971/2007): "may we not say that in social science, too, we proceed from naïve interpretations to critical interpretations *through* structural analysis? But it is depth interpretation that gives meaning to the whole process" (p. 166). The reductionist dialectic works to deconstruct meaning by examining the words, images and feeling tones within the context of the whole text, how they relate and build through the word

movement of the overall text. It is through this reductionist dialectic with its focus on a structural, analytic lens that this work will proceed.

Literary criticism and the transactional theory. Louise Rosenblatt (1978) argues from a critical literature perspective, much as Jung and Freud did about the question of lay analysis, that lay readers are as important as elite critics in terms of interacting and reflecting on the text. Freud's basic argument was thus: training in analysis is required, but the medical training at universities teaches nothing useful about analysis. Furthermore, he states categorically that his medical degree was inapplicable to his development of analysis and practice. Thus, he was a proponent of properly trained, non-doctors conducting analysis—after supervision and training in an institute dedicated to analysis (Freud, 1925/1953). Rosenblatt takes Freud one step further: she argues that once the creator of a text releases her work, she is no longer in control, nor is it desirable for a single correct interpretation. From this perspective literary criticism cannot itself be the arbiter of a single, correct interpretation. Rather, it is the job of each individual reader to interpret and see their own understanding flow from that person's experiences they bring to the text. From this perspective, she places greater emphasis on the experiencing reader versus the professional or academic critic, as inserted between the text and the resultant poem: "for the reader, the poem is lived-through during his intercourse with the text" and "the finding of meanings involves both the author's text and what the reader brings to it" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 14). Thus, from her perspective the "reflection on the literary experiences becomes a re-experiencing, a re-enacting, of the work-as-evoked, and an ordering and elaborating of our responses to it" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 134).

While the critical literature perspective is not the mode of inquiry for this research, it is an important element based on its emphasis on reader interpretation. Rosenblatt explicitly places the reader, that is, this researcher, in a hermeneutic stance. In Rosenblatt's parlance: "the reader's creation of a poem out of a text must be an active, self-ordering and self-corrective process" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 11). It is this understanding that places her work in this methodology.

A romantic and poetic orientation towards a hermeneutical approach. Nilofar Shidmehr (2014) challenges the displacement of poetic inquiry from the philosophical roots of science by Plato. Instead, she advocates a reorientation towards the Greek use of the lyrical response [chorus] prevalent in pre-Platonic Greek theater. For her this invokes a way of knowing apart from the data (the storyline of the protagonist). "What we have left of European philosophy before Aristotle is, on the whole, lyric" (Zwicky, 1992, p. 76).

Joseph Cambray (2014) notes German romanticism's influence upon Jung: "like other Romantics Goethe treated the sciences as hermeneutical; an attitude absorbed by Jung" (p. 13). In other words, there is a retracing towards the original meaning of the word science as knowledge, however derived. Thus, whether through the German romanticism of knowledge through poetry and philosophy, or the works along the line of natural world drawings in the spirit of Alexander Williamson, John James Audubon, Alexander von Humboldt, or Georg Forster, the move the author and others are suggesting here, is that a change in epistimology is in order, a recognition of the intuitive approach to understanding, a Romantic view with the lines erased and the psychological Otherness of hard versus soft science being erased. This is in contrast to Platonic

thinking, which rejected poetic inquiry as it contradicted his focus on episteme, the correct naming of things, orthotes onomaton (Levin, 2001). Jan Zwicky notes that: "what we have left of European philosophy before Aristotle is, on the whole, lyric" (1992, p. 76). Others concur:

> Goethe not only rejected this dichotomy of poetry and science, he also tried to show that quite the opposite was true, that the more science divorces itself from the all-embracing contexts of human life and nature the more the scientific imagination became trapped in a particular and sometimes even abstractedly fantastic way of conceiving things. (Sepper, 1990, p. 197)

Jung (1947/1969), recognizing that his analytical psychology is rooted in the archaic sense of the word science, laments "psychology is still a long way from a development similar to that which the other natural sciences have undergone; also, as we have seen, it has been much less able to shake off the trammels of philosophy" (pp. 168-169). Later in this work, he acknowledges, obliquely, that he is following a German romantic path:

> I fancied I was working along the best scientific lines, establishing facts, observing, classifying, describing causal and functional relations, only to discover in the end that I had involved myself in a net of reflections which extend far beyond natural science and ramify into the fields of philosophy, theology, comparative religion and the humane sciences in general. (Jung, 1947/1954/1969, pp. 216-217)

Also, "life therefore has a specific law of its own which cannot be deduced from the known physical laws of nature" (Jung, 1947/1954/1969, p. 139). Cambray (2009) writing in *Synchronicity: Nature and Psyche in an Interconnected Universe,* locates Jung's work

thematically as scientific holism: “while Jung does not use the term *holism* [emphasis in original] or its variants, he writes extensively about the value of ‘wholeness’“ (p. 33) which I wish to address here. Wholeness, in the context of connecting science, nature and man through an intuitive work, can be inferred to mean that there needs to be a subjective experiencing of landscape on the human psyche. John Cromby (2005), writing from a critical psychological perspective states “mainstream psychology reductively distorts human sociality into individual characteristics such as facets of personality; critical psychology without a notion of embodied subjectivity simply does the opposite, reducing embodied subjectivity to discursive trope, performative stratagem or interactional effect” (pp. 133–134). What Cromby is saying is that a psychology needs a subject, a human being and the embodied, subjective nature of its reaction to its surroundings. Jung implicitly acknowledges the importance of intuition in a science of the human psyche. David Tacey (2009) would concur:

> [there is] the sense of the Chinese saying that the Tao that can be told is not the true Tao...there is, in the end, no rational explanation for the soul’s powerful inherence in the natural world. There can be no simple description of imaginal vision which will meet the intellect’s or the sensing mind’s requirements. (p. 159)

This section is not meant to be an exhaustive discourse on the nature of science, but rather is offered to give context to the author’s choice to use poetics while investigating war trauma from the combatants’ perspective. The preceding was meant to ground the hermeneutic approach towards poetry in the depth psychology tradition and provide perspective on the influence of German romanticism.

Poetry as presentation. This section begins with a poem, to provoke the reader into a series of images as represented by the lyrical representation of poem. "A picture held us captive, and we could not get outside it for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably" (Wittgenstein, 1958, No. 115).

In a dark time, the eye begins to see,
I meet my shadow in the deepening shade;
I hear my echo in the echoing wood,
A lord of nature weeping to a tree.
I live between the heron and the wren,
Beasts of the hill and serpents of the den.

What's madness but nobility of soul
At odds with circumstance? The day's on fire!
My shadow pinned against a sweating wall,
That place among the rocks—is it a cave,
Or winding path? The edge is what I have.

A steady storm of correspondences!
A night flowing with birds, a ragged moon,
And in broad day the midnight come again!
A man goes far to find out what he is—
Death of the self in a long, tearless night,
All natural shapes blazing unnatural light.

> Dark, dark my light, and darker my desire.
>
> My soul, like some heat-maddened summer fly,
>
> Keeps buzzing at the sill. Which I is I?
>
> A fallen man, I climb out of my fear.
>
> The mind enters itself, and God the mind,
>
> And one is One, free in the tearing wind (Roethke, 1963, n.p.)

Neilsen-Glenn (2012) describes the resonance of poetry thusly:

> Resonance. We can look to Japanese haiku masters for images of flower petals thrumming in the wake of a bell's ringing. We can think of the Hindu god, Indra, and the bejeweled net, each intersection marked by a jewel that reflects all other jewels in an infinite relationship resonance that marks, according to Hindu belief, our connections to each other and the world. (p. 6)

Gitlin and Peck (2005) suggest that poetry can give inquiry an ethical component because it "allows [inquiry] to move beyond static forms of knowledge that primarily reinforce common sense and an 'as is' orientation" (p. 37). Sandra Faulkner (2009) suggests the idea of lyric inquiry as a form of inquiry "with the goal of creating relationship between that of the knower and known embodied by ethical engagement" (p. 17). In this, she is echoing the intent of Lorri Neilsen (2008) that the reader "comes away with the resonance of another's world" (p. 96). For these scholars the very act of reading, one's understanding, is expanded through this access to another person's world and unconscious energies in an ethical way. Zwicky (1992) writes:

> while representational thinking works with association of words based on meaning, lyrical thinking presented in poetry "moves by association of images."

> It has been described as an attempt to make the space around actual sounds, words, or lines, resonant. As an evocation of presence, lyric is an attempt to comprehend the whole in a single gesture. (p. 73)

This is similar to Lee (2010): "lyrical thinking is a form of intuition in which the inquirer consciously gains access to feelings and images found in pre-verbal children, and in the wordless energies of each person's unconscious" (p. 19). The authors presented here are reinforcing the notion of Romantic science, that the poets themselves, through their lyrical representations, seek to educate us as to their truths.

Zwicky's (1992) "evocation of presence" echoes Heidegger's assertion that poetry is a presentation of truth. Heidegger (1946/2013) states:

> Truth, as the clearing and concealing of what is, happens in being composed, as a poet composes a poem. All art, as the letting happen of the advent of the truth of what is, is, as such, *essentially poetry*. The nature of art, on which both the art work and the artist depend, is the setting-itself-into-work of truth. (p. 70)

In an earlier work, he associates the *unconcealment*, or clearing of things as being achieved by the work:

> Unconcealment occurs only when it is achieved by work: the work of the word in poetry, the work of stone in temple and statue, the work of the word in thought, the work of the polis as the historical place in which all this is grounded and preserved. (Heidegger, 1964, p. 191)

Poetry, poetics, and language point towards an unconcealing or truth. The language of the author, in its creation, speaks to the reader towards the emergence of truth. A truth in its creation, the work of the word and poet point to a presentation for the

reader that speaks to the poet's truth. In the poet's expression lies language for the reader to interpret and intuit the poet's intention and truth in her setting down of words.

> Heidegger, on the other hand [vs. Derrida], insists that truth "is," and that it "happens in being composed." For him, it is precisely through language that the "advent" of truth occurs. As I argue in Chapter 3, this "happening" of truth in language is not a matter of representation for Heidegger. Truth is not an "absolute" that exists outside of language or that can be presented in language as a content perfectly imitated and thereby contained. It is, rather, an activity, an event, a "setting-itself-into-work" that language, better than any other medium, enables. In Heidegger's thought, it is the purpose of poetry to initiate this penetration of truth into being, and for that reason poetry "has a privileged position." Language, as poetry, is presentational; it incarnates truth as an active presence in the world (Mills-Courts, 1990, p. 20)

This is the primary reason this researcher looks to a hermeneutical interpretation of war combatant poetry. Poetry is also tied to storytelling, to mythos in human endeavors. The epic poems and poets, *Bhagavad Vita*, *The Illiad*, *The Odyssey*, and the *Psalms*, all concern themselves with the telos of humans and the search for morality and righteousness in a violent world.

Summary. The above sections were to delineate why poetry is being used for critical inquiry in this study. First is poetry's lineage in qualitative inquiry, both the creation of poetry and the interpretation of poetry. To echo the later Heidegger (2013), poetry has a special place in understanding Being, poetry as presentation of, a crack in the Earth and an evoker of image in the researcher. Sitting between the poem and its

meaning, is the researcher, interpreting and seeing into the truth of the poet's world. The meaning of the text, through this researcher's lens, places it solidly in the hermeneutic tradition.

Research Procedures

Using a hermeneutical approach, this study seeks to analyze the poetry of war combatants in the context of this primary research question: can non-canonical war poetry reveal or express the archon [ontology] of moral injury? Additionally, is there a telos of moral injury in the combat veteran? If so, does poetry intimate as to what the telos is? In the next sections, I delineate the parameters and research procedures.

Sourcing and selection of poems.

Sourcing. Poems will be sourced by two methods: identifying collections of war poetry identified as war poetry by the author, publisher, or editors and contextual searches of the internet to find poetry published in non-traditional ways. The latter sourcing method is especially important due to this work's focus on the war combatant herself, rather than on canonized poets. The following collections of the former were used: *Out of the Dark, The Poetry of World War I* (Roberts, 1998), and the online journal *As You Were*. The journal, *As You Were* is a publication of the Military Experience and the Arts organization. With full disclosure, The Military Experience and the Arts is a group with whom this researcher has worked with in the past. Of the latter, the following sources were consulted: the Korean War educator website (http://koreanwar-educator.org/topics/poets/index.htm), The National Gulf Veterans Association (www.ngvfa.org.uk/veternas/contribs) the Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), In Honor of our Military

(http://sites.google.com/inhonorofourmilitary/) , War Poetry (www.warpoetry.co.uk) and War on the Rocks (warontherocks.com).

These collections were selected due to the grounding of this work in the combatants' ordinariness. By ordinary I do not mean it in a pejorative sense, rather these poems are not curated by outsiders but allow the veterans to speak unfiltered. By sourcing them in such a manner it removes the obstacle of being seen, or, from the depth psychological perspective, allows this researcher to see through the standard publishing gatekeepers into the veterans' own words.

Selection. For each war in the 20th century to present day, poems were gathered from the above sources. The first selection screening eliminated poems written about war, but not by participants of war. This initial screening was to maintain alignment with this study's focus on the war combatant and his experience rather than outside commentators speaking in a poetic voice. The secondary screening applied was based upon whether the poem's author was involved in one of these conflicts: World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Desert Storm, Iraq, or Afghanistan. Next, in the case of multiple poems from the same author, only one poem from each author was included., the selection of which was based on reading and choosing the exemplary poem.

After the initial screening criteria was applied more than 21 poems remained from the identified sources. To reduce the number to the maximum of 21, a second vetting was guided by the following principles. This limit is somewhat arbitrary, but the researcher believes that the inclusion of more than 21 would be a distraction from the primary research question: (a) the poems were classified as to which conflict it

represented and placed in a stack, one stack for each conflict, (b) once separated into stacks based on conflict, each stack of poems were shuffled, (c) a round robin approach was then utilized, taking the top poem from each conflict stack in turn and placing it on the retained pile and, (d) the round robin selection continued until the maximum 21 were selected.

The above selection criteria were chosen based on the following principles: first, to minimize selection bias and secondly, to provide representation across a wide variety of conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries. The sample size was selected to balance the need for a variety of authors with applicability. As a qualitative study, the universality of applicability cannot be assured, but it is hoped that it intimates towards a unifying experience, at least of those veterans who choose to express themselves through poetry.

Data gathering. Keeping the research question at the foremost, the poems were approached from a reductionist hermeneutical stance. This allowed an exploration of the meaning behind the poetic work and a paying attention to what images, components, or themes that may or may not be evoked during the reading of the work. Hermeneutics, as a whole, does not have a mechanistic approach inherent in some other research methodologies. Max Van Manen (1990) specifically objects to the concretized approach. Instead he advocates a procedure composed of the following processes: turning towards the work, deep questioning of the work, a reflection on essential themes emerging from the reading of the work and balancing between the tension of the hermeneutic circle.

The following steps were followed to gather data from each poem:

1. Each poem was read in contemplative silence.

2. Each poem reflected was on in its entirety while recording any themes, images, or components that come to mind.
3. Information was recorded that arose either from concurrence or disagreement with emerging themes, components, or images.
4. Each poem was classified and assigned a category as to major and minor themes and recorded in a data record, per Dey (1993, p. 125) that includes following the words or fragments used in this categorization (the databit), the category or categories assigned, images invoked, the poem title, the author, the conflict, and any relevant comments. A sample data record is shown here:

Poem Title	A War Poem
Poem Author	A Soldier
Conflict	WWII
Databit	Anguish
Category	Emotion
Invoked Image	None
Comment	None

Data analysis.

The following steps were utilized to analyze the data recorded in the data gathering section:

1. The metadata synthesized in the data gathering phase and recorded in the data record was arranged in columns by category, with the respective databits (words and sentence fragments) listed in each row under that category. See the following for a sample synthesis of category databits:

Category	**Pain**
Databit	Anguish

Databit	Bitter
Databit	Bloodshed
Databit	Downhearted

2. Categories that were sparse, containing only a few data records were spliced with like categories to create a more balanced tree.
3. Categories that were over-represented in terms of data records were split among existing or new categories created after further examination.
4. Each category and its associated data records will be examined in the context of moral injury. Do the words and images in whole or in part point towards moral injury? To what extent, or not? How so or how not?
5. Finally, the poems were read through a mythic lens showing where the poems reinforced or detracted from the concept of moral injury.

Though outside the scope of the current study, there is the possibility that there is a range of moral injury, much like Lawrence Kohlberg's (1984) work on moral development.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Methodology

Limitations. Due to the small sample size analyzed the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the entire combat veteran community. Likewise, gender or ethnic differences were not explored. Finally, the subset of combat veterans who turn to poetry as a form of expression tends to be an unrepresentative sample and concomitant, for some, sequela which accompanies their combat experience.

Delimitations. The poetry was limited to the poetry from the 20th and 21st century only, primarily to bracket the study within a more modern context. Twentieth century warfare introduced a more mechanized and violent weaponry that saw a turning in the way warfare is conducted. In America, the introduction of the Gatling gun, the

best-known forerunner of the fully automatic machine gun to the battlefield during the Civil War, is often referenced as a starting point for modern warfare. For the purposes of this study I have elected to not include this war for several reasons. First, though the Gatling gun was devastating, the mechanization of World War I with its tanks, trucks and aircraft changed modern warfare far more than the introduction of the Gatling. Secondly, the civil war is somewhat unique in its family against family nature and has psychological implications this study is not oriented to explore. This is not to say that the sequela of war is a new phenomenon, rather it is only beginning in the 20th century where psychology and particularly depth psychology turned towards the psychological conditions that modern warfare war engenders in an individual's psyche in a meaningful way.

Ethical procedures. As denoted in the general approach and data gathering sections, my study methodology is hermeneutics. As such, there are no human subjects, therefore an ethics application with human subjects and review board are unnecessary.

Chapter 7: Results and Discussion

Initial Pool Selection and Analysis

Per the selection criteria in the methodology section, the initial pool consisted of 72 poems drawn from 7 conflicts. To reiterate the selection criteria for the initial pool is as follows: the first selection screening will eliminate poems written about war, but not by participants of war. This initial screening is to maintain alignment with this study's focus on the war combatant and his experience. The breakdown of poems in the initial pool are shown in Table 1. The pool selection revealed minor difficulties in finding representative poetry written by actual combatants. This manifested itself particularly in two conflicts: World War II and to a lesser extent the first Gulf War. For WWII a plethora of poems were available but a large portion of them were written by anti-war activists who did not actually participate in the conflict. The Gulf war also presented mild difficulties in the number of available poems, particularly by American combatants. Of all of the conflicts, the Gulf war seems to have generated the least amount of poetry whether written by combatants or not. Somewhat surprisingly, the Korean War generated significant amounts of poetry by combatants, perhaps driven by the need to expunge the moniker of *The Forgotten War* by reminding the general public of this short, brutal war.

Though specifically not included, it is worth noting that any number of actions that took place in the 20th and 21st century did not produce any poetry. Conflicts such as Grenada, Philippines, Lebanon, Panama, Somalia and Libya seem to have generated little or no poetry. An internet search for poems from these conflicts yielded results that did not have any poetry specifically from veterans of those conflicts. A review of seven issues of *As You Were: The Military Review* yielded no results. Likewise, a search for

books of poems from these conflicts was without fruition. However, these conflicts have produced popular cultural artifacts, namely film: *Blackhawk Down* (Somalia), *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* (Libya), *Heartbreak Ridge* and *Operation Urgent Fury* (Grenada) and *The Panama Deception* (Panama). In fairness, an exhaustive search was not conducted to specifically root out poems from these conflicts. I note the void here as a noticing of a perceptual gap. It leads to a question that further work may explicate: do these small wars, quickly in and out of the cultural memory, generate gaps in our noticing these veterans? Or perhaps there are so few veterans of these conflicts that their anguish does not get seen when bookended by larger conflicts. I conclude by saying the absence of poetry seems noticeable when compared to the large number of poems generated and accessible from the larger conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Table 1

Initial Poem Pool by Number of Poems and Conflict

Conflict	Number of Poems
WWI	9
WWII	10
Korean War	13
Vietnam War	10
Gulf War	9
Afghanistan War	8
Iraq War	13

General Tone of the Initial Poetry Pool

WWII poetry was the consistently least critical in its words and tone. This comports with the general narrative that WWII was the good war. Yet WWII at one

point had more psychiatric casualties heading home than being sent into theater (Grossman & Siddle, 2010). Thus, WWII poetry perhaps reflects the reluctance of that generation of combatants to discuss the war while suffering in private. WWI poetry reflected a deep cynicism about the war in general while delineating the horrors of that particular war. The Vietnam poets also reflected a deep cynicism as well as high levels of intrusion. Intrusion in this context means their poetry reflects images that are unbidden: horrific images that appear while conscious or in a dream state and infuse their poetic work. The Gulf war poetry reflects abandonment of the combatants by their government post-conflict. In general, the tone of the poetry matches the general narrative about each war in the culture with the exception of Gulf War vets. By this I mean that WWII and Gulf Wars are generally held up as good wars whereas the Vietnam and Iraq wars are generally held up as examples of bad wars. The poetry of WWII vets, even when critical, still reflects pride in what was accomplished. Gulf War veteran's poetry however expresses dismay over perceived abandonment by their government in contravention to the view that the Gulf war extirpated the treatment Vietnam vets received when coming home.

Descriptive Results of the Textual Analysis

Per the methodology section the 72 poems in the initial pool were categorized into their respective conflicts. From each conflict, 3 poems were randomly selected for detailed textual analysis. In order to complete the textual analysis, categories were selected that reflected thematic categories identified by Maguen and Litz (2012) as being applicable to moral injury: "The conceptual model posits that individuals who struggle with transgressions of moral, spiritual, or religious beliefs are haunted by dissonance and

internal conflicts. In this framework, harmful beliefs and attributions cause guilt, shame, and self-condemnation" (p. 1). In addition, thematic categories applicable to a diagnosis of PTSD as delineated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) were incorporated. These inductively developed themes with characteristic phrases are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Inductively Developed Categorical Themes

Category	Thematic Category	Characteristic Phrases
Moral Injury		
	Cynicism/Irony	"These jabs and tabs will do just the trick" (Battley, n.d.); "peace is why we're here to fight" (Willey, 2014); "Much the higher things—the murder of our fellow man" (Vernede, 1917/1998)
	Betrayal	"Tell with such zest the old Lie Dulce et Decorum est Pro patria Mori" (Owen, 1920/1998); "our gov't has told us it doesn't exist so how dare I suggest it does?" (Battley, n.d.)
	Guilt	"When we go home to enjoy our fill, they are still there on that lonely hill" (Authors Unknown, n.d.); "for every hill we won, someone had to pay" (Chase, n.d.)
	Shame	"Symbol of the shame of nations until the last star's fallen" (King, 1942); "tears are checked beneath a stonewashed face" (M. J. Waite, 2010)
	Soul loss/spiritual angst	"Tear in the fabric of his being" (Breska, n.d.); "shaken bad internally" (Breska, n.d.); "anguish of my spirit" (M. J. Waite, 2010); eyes as dead as his soul (O'Dell, 2017)

Category	Thematic Category	Characteristic Phrases
Moral Injury		
	Horror	"Made my hands red in their gore" (Rosenberg, 1917/1998); "a devil's scream of horrifying mirth" (King, 1942); "white eyes writing in his face" (Owen, 1920/1998)
	Immoral action/murder	"Much the higher things—the murder of our fellow man" (Vernede, 1917/1998)
PTSD		
	Avoidance	"I still need to hide" (Battley, n.d.); "sometimes oblivion is all that I need and I find that in a bottomless glass" (Battley, n.d.)
	Arousal	"The adrenaline rush you crave" (Turner, 2005)
	Startle	"Exposing my hiding place" (D'Elia, 2016); "from under my table" (D'Elia, 2016)
	Paranoia	"the informant, in the kitchen, talking with the soldiers pointing my way" (D'Elia, 2016)
Crossover		
	Self-harm/suicidal	"Is this the end of my road; here bullet" (Turner, 2005)

Category	Thematic Category	Characteristic Phrases
Crossover		
	Grief	"In this "Land of the Morning Calm," no, Mourning calm" (DeBlasi, 2005); "eyelashes barely whispered goodbye" (Elytis, 1995)
	Anger	"Stop writing fucking poems about it" (Martin, 2008); "fuel the fire with poppies, war books and Arnie films" (Martin, 2008)
	Intrusion/Torment	"The war is still raging inside my head" (Carlsen, n.d.); "I killed them but they would not die" (Rosenberg, 1917/1998); "For them I could not rest nor sleep; and still they rose to torture me" (Rosenberg, 1917/1998)
	Withdrawal	I get lost in a room that's blank and so bare" (Battley, n.d.); "so I do what I can, to hide who I am" (Carlsen, n.d.)

As each poem was read distinctive phrases (data bits) were noted and the relevant thematic category or categories were assigned. Note that there were several data bits with ambiguous or irrelevant thematic categories. The irrelevant categories include themes that are not listed in *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) nor indicative of moral injury. There were some poems where a theme was ambiguous, there was not a way to definitively categorize them in the moral injury or PTSD categories. The data bits from these thematic categories are not included as they are outside of the scope of this study. There was almost equal representation between the number of poets sourced from United Kingdom and United States sources. One Greek poet whose work was translated into

English also made the pool. Interestingly, the number of poets represented in each category, by country were evenly spread (Table 3).

Table 3

Poet Counts by Poet Country and Category

	Irrelevant	PTSD	Crossover	Ambiguous	Moral Injury
Greek			1	1	1
UK	3	3	4	4	8
US	3	3	5	6	9
Grand Total	6	6	10	11	18

The distribution of the number of poets by country and category are not statistically significant. The counts are included here to give an overview of the distributions to show that in the small sample analyzed in this study, the sample did not skew towards one particular country. In addition, the distributions of category counts did not skew towards one country or other. A larger sample size could be analyzed to show statistically significant results, but that is not the focus of this qualitative study. The distributions of data bits by poet country and category also exhibit relatively even distributions though again the results are not statistically significant (Table 4).

Table 4

Data Bit Counts by Country and Category

	Irrelevant	PTSD	Ambiguous	Crossover	Moral Injury
Greek			1	1	4
UK	4	5	5	18	33
US	6	5	8	14	34
Grand Total	10	10	14	33	71

The even distribution of the data bit counts by country and category points to the proposition that war experiences are not divergent between the US and UK. The Greek poet also points towards a similar conclusion, though the paucity of data makes such a conclusion speculative.

Finally, I explored the intersection of conflict and general category as exhibited in Table 5 below. Again, there appears be relatively coherent experiences across conflicts with two notable exceptions. First, is the relatively high number of phrases in the crossover category for the WWI poets. No other category displays this uneven distribution. A perhaps unexpected result is the relatively high number of PTSD data bits of WWI combatant poets. One would expect that the Vietnam conflict would generate the highest, definitive PTSD data bits considering that the PTSD diagnosis emerged in the aftermath of that conflict. The fact that WWI poets had one more definitively PTSD data bit than the Vietnam poets, combined with the crossover category, which has thematic categories that can be argued relevant for either PTSD or moral injury expressions, intimates towards further exploration. Given that many of the shell shock symptoms, in the lexicon of WWI, correlate with PTSD and TBI diagnoses of Afghanistan and Iraq today, this data seems to confirm Litz et al.'s (2009) theory that moral injury and PTSD may present as co-morbid as well as independent of each other. The ability to discriminate between these two conceptual models has great impact on treatment modalities and strategies. These differentiated strategies are delineated further near the end of this chapter.

Table 5

Data Bit Counts by Conflict and Category

	Irrelevant	PTSD	Ambiguous	Crossover	Moral Injury
Vietnam	1	3	2	4	6
WWII			3	1	12
Korea	1	1	3	5	7
Afghanistan	2	1		3	12
Iraq		1	2	5	10
Gulf War	5		3	5	13
WWI	1	4	1	10	11
Grand Total	10	10	14	33	71

Can non-canonical war poetry reveal or express the archon [ontology] of moral injury? Here the term *archon* is used in its Gnostic sense which posits an archon as a servant of the creator god: this Gnostic meaning is related to archology or "doctrine of the origin of things" (*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971/1987). The answer is cautiously yes. Overall data indicates that moral injury, as expressed in war combatant poetry shows a significant bias towards thematic categories that fall under the moral injury rubric (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Data Bit Counts by Category

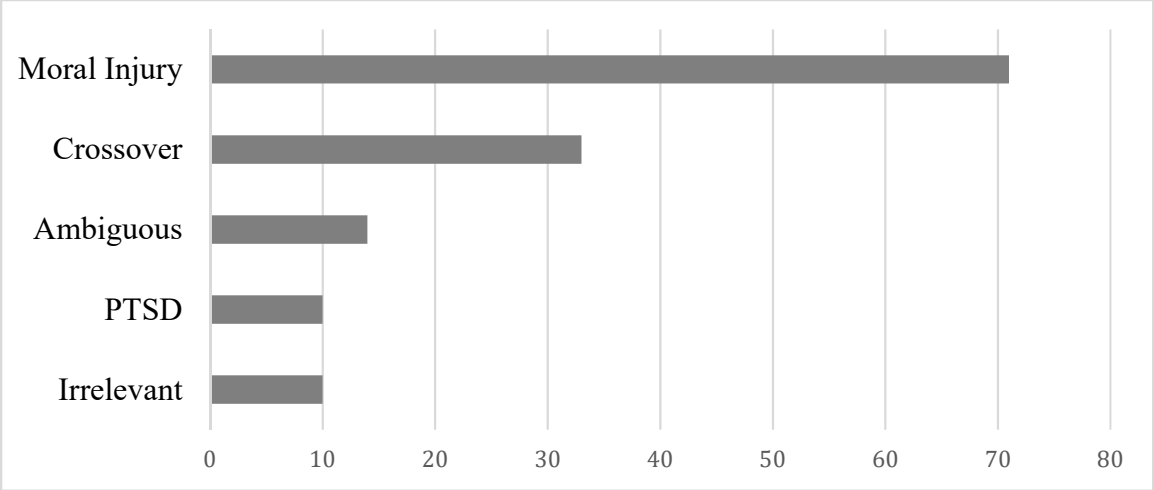
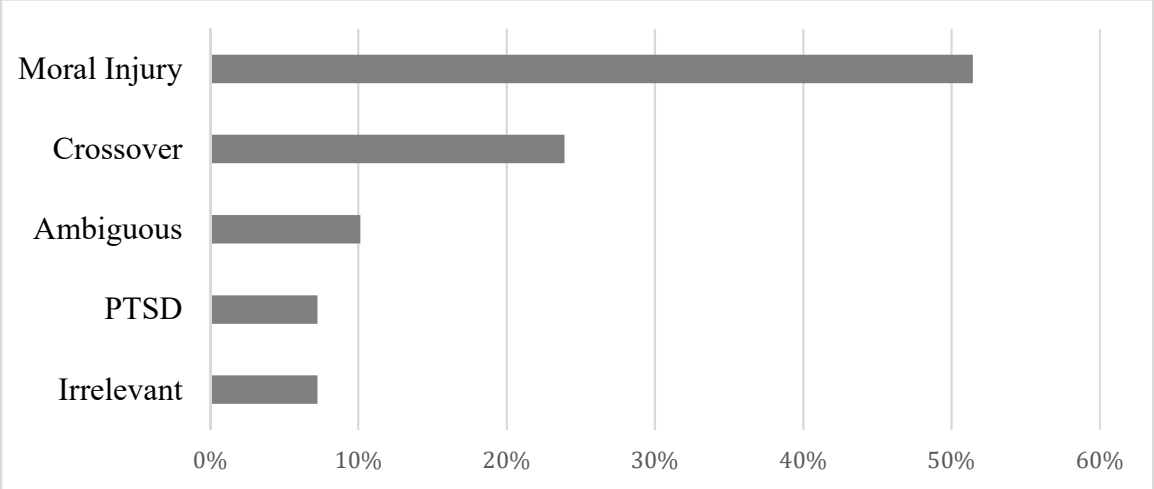


Figure 1 shows raw counts of the number of data bits per category. Figure 2 shows the percentage of total of data bits by category.

Figure 2

Data Bit Percent of Total by Category



As shown, 51% of the data fall in the moral injury category, including the crossover category, where the thematic categories could reasonably be applied to both moral injury or PTSD, the total comprises 75%.

More detail is represented in thematic categories, showing distinct patterns towards certain themes. The Intrusion/torment and cynicism/irony themes dominate, splitting the top two categories between the crossover and moral injury categories. These top two categories are not explicitly identified by Maguen and Litz (2012, p. 1). Soul loss/spiritual angst, guilt and shame are explicitly explicated and these 3 themes are present in the top 7 themes. Other themes present in the data point towards moral injury in a more circumspect manner. These thematic categories indicative of moral injury are covered in more detail in the next sections.

There are a number of themes indicative of moral injury not explicitly identified by Maguen and Litz (2012). This section illustrates those themes and how they suggest moral injury.

Horror was placed under the moral injury category as being repulsed by an act that can be a direct shock to the conscience. Some representative phrases from the studied poets: “bullets don’t make little red holes they rip smash and gouge” (Martin, 2008), “made my hands red in their gore” (Rosenberg, 1917/1998) and “in all my dreams, before my helpless sight he plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning” (Owen, 1920/1998).

Betrayal, particularly as articulated by these poets, is the sense that one’s government or society betrayed the trust that one would not be forgotten: abandoned with physical or psychic injuries: “after a review of your paperwork son, we believe you are just fine” (Carlsen, n.d.) and “why, why all that blood, the unspeakable holocaust, the infinite pain? Was it all in vain?” (DeBlasi, 2005). There is also a sense that governments, in particular and society in general display contempt for the sanctity of life

"look where it got them, reduced to line after perfect line of white stones" (Martin, 2008). Thus betrayal in many forms is a violation of ones sense of morality.

I have also classified expressions of bitter cynicism and irony as morally injurious. This arises out of the skepticism displayed in cynical prose which intimates towards a distrust that what one is engaged in is ethical or is in direct contradiction to normative morality. As expressed in the literature review, there would be no need for a just war theory if, in fact, war did not contradict some generally held Christian ethic embodied in Jesus' exhortation to "love thy neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). This sentiment is not restricted to Christianity but is cited here simply as representative of spiritual traditions. Irony, by using language that is the opposite of what is expected, highlights the absurd or accepted truth by substitution of its opposite. This in turn points towards a lie or betrayal, with the betrayal violating one's ethics and moral beliefs. Indicative phrases of this cynicism and irony in the data appear as "peace is why we're here to fight" (Willey, 2014), "much the higher things, the murder of our fellow man" (Vernede, 1917/1998) and "ribald and unwitting we impale our cultural commodity hacks" (Uebbing, 2016).

Crossover thematic categories and their import to moral injury. To be tormented or experience the intrusion of unbidden images leads one to posit that these two themes also shock the conscience of the warrior poets. Phrases such as "for them I could not rest nor sleep" (Rosenberg, 1917/1998) and "in all my dreams, before my helpless sight he plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning" (Wilson, 1920/1998) illustrate this. I have also placed grief in the crossover category due to ambiguity in *DSM-V*. Grief may point towards survival guilt or it may point towards an inability to

mourn, a hardening heart of depression armoring emotional responses "in this 'Land of the Morning Calm,' no, Mourning calm" (DeBlasi, 2005). Finally, self-harm and withdrawal point towards additional problems in classifying phrases exclusively in a moral injury or PTSD ontology. Applicable phrases here are "trapped inside of a world deep within my mind" (Carlsen, n.d.), "here, Bullet, here is where the world ends, every time" (Turner, 2005) and "is this the end of my road" (Battley, n.d.).

These thematic categories provide a contextual container for the images the poets evoke. Quantitatively, I have shown that these evoked images point towards moral injury. The frequency with which these themes appeared in the initial study of the poems provides a view into the relative importance of each theme in defining moral injury as expounded by the war poets.

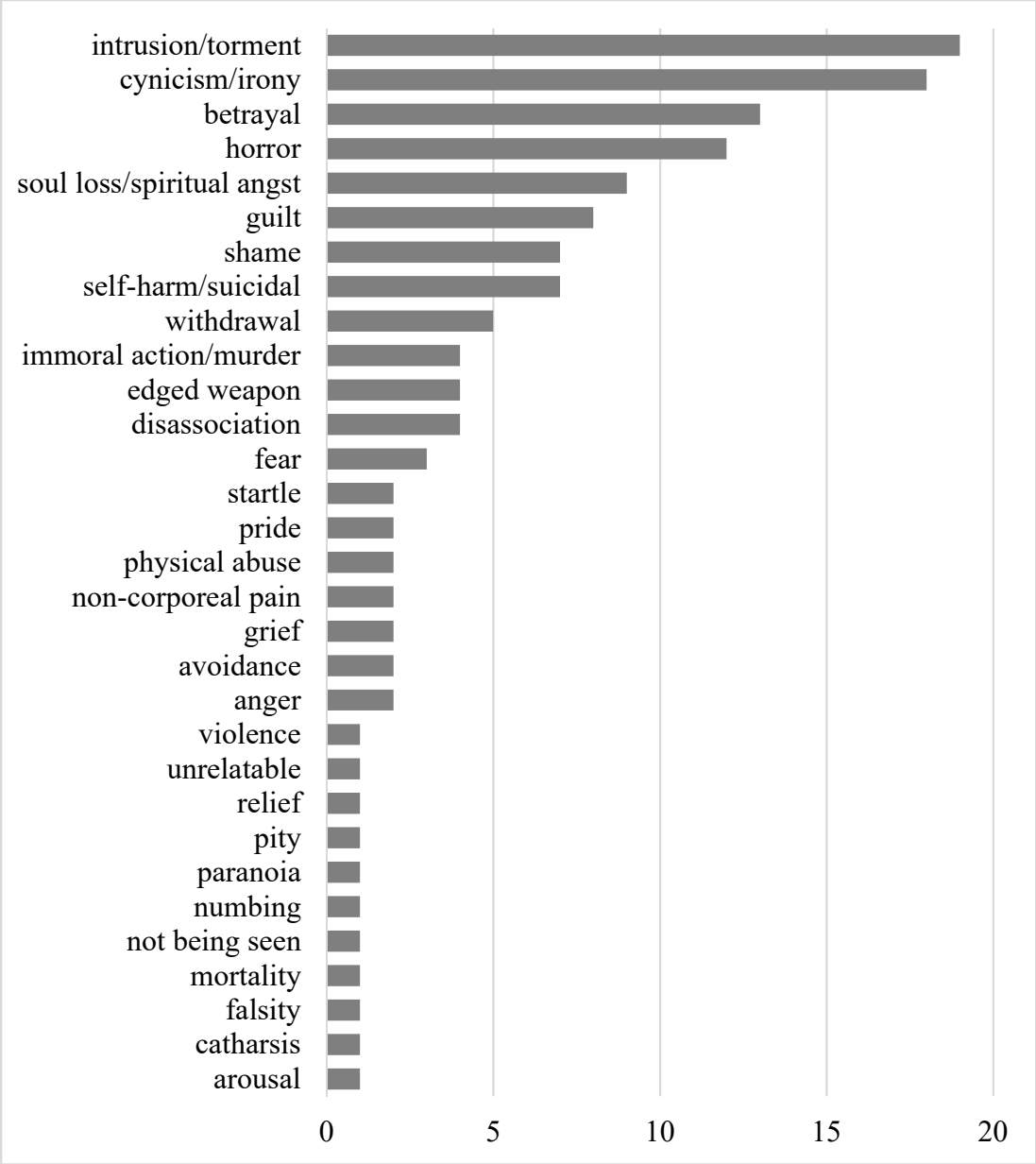
The poems themselves allude to an image of suffering outside of a quantitative examination while a mythological and depth psychological lens points towards the telos of that suffering. As Christine Downing (1999) says,

> such attending to the psycho-logic of myth and the mytho-logic of the psyche's processes might be described as an exploration in mythopoeisis, in soul making, for it gives us some sense of how the soul is given its shape through poetry, through images [emphasis added]. (p. 26)

These thematic categories with their attendant frequency in the poems are summarized in Figure 3 on the next page.

Figure 3

Data Bit Counts by Thematic Category



Into and Out of Atē's Embrace

Therapeuō means not only to heal or cure, thus; the descendant term therapy, it also means to render service to the gods. For it is the gods, from a mythic and archetypal perspective, that will drive us mad and show us the cure. Phaedrus tells us "he who,

having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art-he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted" (Plato, trans. 1871). Thus, for Phaedrus, one cannot be cured until one has become mad, in fact, one cannot enter the temple of healing if one has not been touched by madness. It is, as Plato tells us, a divine madness that leads to the cure (Plato, 360). In a more contemporary context Hillman tells us "myths do not tell us how, they simply give us the invisible background which starts us imagining, questioning, going deeper" (1975, p. 158). Hillman here points towards the gods and questioning. I start with: why poetry? What compels these war veterans to poetry? For that, I start with morality and Atē.

Atē is a goddess said to lead men and even the gods to ruin in a self-destructive way, even when the person enthralled with her knows his behavior is immoral or against his self-interest. Atē [Ruin] is born out of Hateful Discord:

> Hateful Discord in turn
> bore painful Hardship,
> and Forgetfulness, and Starvation,
> and the Pains, full of weeping,
> the Battles and the Quarrels, the Murders
> and the Manslaughters,
> the Grievances, the lying Stories,
> the Disputations,
> and Lawlessness and Ruin, who share
> one another's nature. (Hesiod, trans. 1959/1972, pp. 136-137)

Being the daughter of Hateful Discord, it is tragic to fall under Atē 's spell for "it is she [Atē] who confuses our minds and blinds us spiritually that we not only act with a disregard of what is morally right but also our own long-term self-interest" (Sanford, 1995, p. 53). If indeed the morally injured combatant has fallen under Atē's influence, to what end? For what purpose does Atē make her appearance? If one is indeed in a state of moral confusion and irrational behavior following war, what does this signal? One interpretation is she appears to portend a dark night of the soul, one that could end in a downward spiral of chaos, insanity, and death. Caught in her throes, one can egoically struggle, or recognize that Necessity [Ananke] holds the key.

Necessity? Why or what does she demand? "Necessity, whom not the god of war withstands" (Plato, trans. 1925, 196d). But why Necessity? "The necessity for mortals to serve the gods is why the Greeks also associated Ananke [Necessity] with healing, for when a person realizes that she or he *must* live in a certain way, then Ananke is served and health can come" (Sanford, 1995, p. 32). And what certain way does Necessity demand we live? "Thus, the 'have to's' of life, which are expressive of the reality of Ananke [Necessity] include the necessity to create" (Sanford, 1995, p. 29). It is to this creative Necessity that our war poets are driven.

For the act of war is the opposite of necessary creation—it is, indeed, destruction rather than creation, death rather than life. Downing (1999) would argue that Goddess veneration is the recognition she represents life begotten of the womb, creation. Downing is making a general reference of the veneration of Goddess as a creator. There are specific goddesses of death, such as Kali or Nephthys: Nephthys is indeed the opposite of Isis who is central to the rest of this work. Downing is not arguing for or

against a specific goddess as creator as such, or even Goddess as creator always, instead it is the goddess aspect of creation that is venerated: here I use this specific aspect of goddess in contrast to death. Athena's war is not Ares' war. One could argue that the prosecution of war, its strategy, is a creative endeavor but the result is destruction, annihilation without rebirth. This death in the warrior's soul, understood as moral injury may be necessary to catalyze the soul-searching compulsory for rebirth "the goddess nurtures not only physical life but the life of the soul. Rebirth is not understood as the return of the same, but base metamorphism, transformed consciousness. Death and new vision are closely intertwined" (Downing, 1999, p.13). This need for a creative life, catalyzed by Atē, driven by Necessity, to create, drives certain warriors to express in prose and poetry; soul-making out of death. "A birth into death, into the imaginal, a birth in the soul, a birth of soul" (Sanford, 1995, p.66).

Driven by Necessity the war poets studied here express two main themes: a need for remembering and a need to be re-membered. Remembrance comes in many forms, remembered as a human and remembering the horrible cost of war. Re-membering is more complex, both a physical as well as a psychical re-membering is expressed. As in this opening section, it is the goddesses of both Greek and Egyptian pantheons that pave the way.

Remembering with Mnemosyne

It is fitting that Mnemosyne is a Titan, as well as considered the mother of the Muses (Hesiod, trans. 1914, ll. 53). This fitting is two-fold. First, as Plato's Phaedrus has said, it is the Muses who touch us with divine madness opening a channel to healing. Second, as a Titan, she and her lineage were banished into the underworld for their

chaotic, Titanic appetites: a fitting backdrop to war. War as thunder, Zeus' bolts, Apollo's arrows, Ares' blade slashing, a fight for survival first, morality second: a regression to the primal, unregulated aspects of psyche. Mnemosyne is associated not only with memory, but with *Lethe* the water of forgetfulness (Pausanias, trans. 1918). Who, however, can forget war's chaos? Who can forget death, dismemberment, the stench of burnt flesh and the coppery tang of spilled lifeblood? For these poets, it is obvious they cannot. It stretches from the mild

> I taste lush green shadows the hoses left,
>
> And I breath newly
>
> Sliced grass, filaments rising
>
> With dandelion manes—summer's flotsam;
>
> and revisit the smells: scalding desert air;
>
> dark tar broiled; metal blades blasting night; (Loveland, 2015)

to the obscene

> I killed and killed with slaughter mad;
>
> I killed till all my strength was gone.
>
> And still they rose to torture me,
>
> For Devils only die in fun. (Rosenberg, 1917/1998, p. 146)

This torturous aspect of Mnemosyne seems curious. Why do these memories bind and cause such anguish in the human psyche? What aspect of Mnemosyne requires this continued suffering? She has a dual role, both memory and time. For it is her function to preserve the oral traditions and histories in the time before writing, to preserve for future generations. Thus, this aspect of not letting warriors forget is a way of

reminding humanity the cost of Titanic appetites culminating in war. Each warrior psyche forced to remember combat in its non-erotic form is a psyche compelled to not forget.

This aspect of not-forgetting applies equally to those with moral injury and those with PTSD. In the attempt to forget, those with PTSD or moral injury may be attempting to disassociate from the emotional pain of the remembered image. However, Mnemosyne does not allow the warrior to forget. Instead, these painful images may come unbidden with its laden affect into the consciousness of the suffering warrior. These serve to remind the warrior that this pain must be dealt with.

It is this remembering aspect, combined with Necessity which reinforces Mnemosyne's role as the mother of the Muses and to those who express in poetic form. Necessity compels a poetic form of Mnemosyne:

> Why is the eleventh hour of the eleventh day
> Of the eleventh month so painful—
> That I die inside every year the last post is sound
> From a melancholy horn? (M. J. Waite, 2010).

For M. J. Waite, he answers himself, it is guilt.

> I guess I may never know within the
> Confines of my guilt,
> For as war beckons every lad – an adventurer,
> There is a silent fortune of tears inside for the
> Lives ceased so quickly (2010).

Guilt as argued previously, is a prime component to the moral dimension of combat suffering. There is no guilt where morality or ethics does not play a part. Memory itself is a reminder of the spiritual component of psyche, in Jung's words the "soul, is naturaliter religiosa, i.e., possesses a religious function" (Jung, 1944/1980, p. 42-43). Mnemosyne, though it may feel cruel to the suffering veteran demands not only that the soul needs to be reminded of the moral transgression(s), but also that soul needs healing.

> I have treated many hundreds of patients. Among those in the second half of life – that is to say, over 35 – there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers, and none of them has really been healed who did not regain his religious outlook (Jung, 1933/2001, p. 229).

Memory, remembering, is a key component of regaining the religious outlook on life. Pausanias (trans. 1918) chronicles how Memory is a key component of consulting the Oracle of Trophonius:

> he is taken by the priests, not at once to the oracle, but to fountains of water very near to each other. Here he must drink water called the water of Forgetfulness, that he may forget all that he has been thinking of hitherto, and afterwards he drinks of another water, the water of Memory, which causes him to remember what he sees after his descent. (9.39.7–9.39.8)

The drinking of Lethe, the water of forgetfulness, allows the pilgrim to clear his mind for what the Oracle will reveal during her descent. The water of Memory, besides allowing the supplicant to remember what was revealed also impels knowledge sharing:

> After his ascent from Trophonius the inquirer is again taken in hand by the priests, who set him upon a chair called the chair of Memory, which stands not far from the shrine, and they ask of him, when seated there, all he has seen or learned… Those who have descended into the shrine of Trophonius are obliged to dedicate a tablet on which is written all that each has heard or seen (Pausanias, trans. 1918, 9.39.13-9.39.14).

This compelled sharing of one's memories of the descent in the aftermath with the collective culture strikes the author as one component of telos, the why of Mnemosyne. "If you are too successful in forgetting pain, forgetting grief, fear and disgust, you may dry up the springs of sweetness, enjoyment and pleasure in another person's company" (Shay, 2002 p. 39).

Thus, Necessity compels the creative process, the need to bring something into the world. Mnemosyne does not let the warrior forget, she necessitates the poet's emergence out of the warrior, to re-examine the moral dilemma infecting the warrior-poet soul, as Heidegger would say, an "un-concealing," aletheia. (1950/2001, p. 53) of not-forgetting, *apophainesthai* (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 56).

Remembering with Ariadne

Ariadne's special connection with death is preeminently represented by the labyrinth from which most never return" (Downing, 1999, p. 64). This warrior death to the civil world, cast aside outside the city gates, figures prominently. The war combatant

separated from the military no longer camps outside the gates with his fellow warriors, nor is she fully present inside the gates. Carlsen (n.d.) exemplifies this dilemma:

> I'm home now and everything is supposed to be okay
>
> As hard as I try I still feel so out of place
>
> Trapped inside a world deep within my mind

Is it Ariadne that leads one back from the precipice, the labyrinth, the madness? "Madness not as sickness….but a companion to life at its healthiest" (Otto, 1965, p. 143). The answer is no, not directly. Ariadne provides the tool, the thread to allow the path back to be traced. She also provides an anchor to our warrior by holding the end of the thread firm. However, it is the warrior himself who must have the courage and wit to undertake the labyrinth and its attendant monster risking sanity for madness. "Our greatest blessings, says Socrates in the Phaedrus, comes to us by way of madness—provided, he adds, that the madness comes from a god" (Brown, 1961, p. 7). The war madness of Ares and the madness of Memory:

> He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
>
> If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
>
> Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
>
> And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
>
> His hanging face like a devil's sick of sin;
>
> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
>
> Come gargling from the froth corrupted lungs. (Owen, 1920/1998)

Does she hold the string, that tethers the warrior to civil life? That holds the key to re-civilize? Ariadne's holding the thread for Theseus invokes the image of providing the

warrior a path to rejoin the world after being lost in the fugue of war. No longer is the warrior trapped fighting Minotaur or caged inside her inner landscape.

> I'm expected to be a functioning member of society
>
> So I do what I can, to hide who I am, so I can be who they want me to be
>
> (Carlsen, n.d.).

This interpretation is true, up to a point, but the emphasis here is on remembering. The warrior has already defeated one Minotaur by surviving combat, Ares and Apollo have had their day, it is the goddess who helps him remember his humanity. However, there are also post-combat monsters that can prove to be more potent and difficult than mere corporeal survival. Here I am reminded of the eternal question I have asked myself: "how can I be so good at something so immoral?" Indeed, the question may be restated: "have I become the dragon I went to slay?" What part of the warrior's psychology has been changed? What part of their faith in the general moral goodness of man has been shaken to its core? These aspects of the Minotaur myth are interwoven throughout this work. In fact, a work on moral injury examined solely through the lens of this myth could be conducted. For now, these further aspects of the Minotaur myth are held in abeyance and reserved for future scholars.

If indeed, Ariadne is the anchor back then what are we to make of Ariadne's abandonment on a desert isle? Perhaps it points to the liminal nature of the anima figure. She figures prominently in leading the warrior back from the labyrinth of descent, then fades and re-emerges when needed. Downing (1999) says, "The story suggests that anima dependence must be left behind" (p. 56). The hero, led back to civil society must

complete the journey on his own, for if he remains dependent, there is the danger that he experiences the madness of Dionysus:

> Although I get lost I still need to hide
>
> And my bed is the best place I know
>
> But sometimes oblivion is all that I need
>
> And I find that in a bottomless glass (Battley, n.d.).

Sadly, though back in the civilian world, all too many succumb to the more orgiastic, drunken aspects of Dionysus. By leaving Ariadne to her betrothed on the isle one avoids this. Ariadne can only show the hero a way back, but the hero can only be led so far, it is up to him to complete the final journey home.

Re-Membering with Isis and Osiris

The myth of Isis and Osiris is one of love and re-membering: "the world is filled with love stories but few of them are as profoundly filled with as many facets as the story of Isis and Osiris" (Cott, 1994, p. 3). There are mythical and alchemical aspects of the story as well "not only were they sister and brother, they were also husband and wife, queen and king, goddess and god" (Cott, 1994, p. 3). The dual aspects of masculine and feminine in this myth point to the feminine as re-membering the masculine, resurrecting life from a dismembered death. This fits closely with the Greek goddesses from previous sections. Of course, in order to be re-membered, one must have experienced dismemberment.

Indeed, the myth of Osiris and Isis is one of Osiris' dismemberment and Isis' re-membering Osiris in order to conceive a child with him. This points to the never changing story of death and rebirth. Within the context of this study, this points towards

the telos of warrior suffering. Rebirth is not possible without death. As this study unfolds in the following sections and pages I will show the applicability of this myth to suffering war veterans. In the next section I turn first to Jung's conception of the complex in order to frame moral injury as a symbolic dismemberment or death.

Combat, splitting, and symbolic dismemberment. It has been widely established that combat radically changes those who participate in it. War has been described as days and weeks of sheer boredom followed by seconds and minutes of sheer terror. This terror and the acts that occur in combat have been shown to cause psychological problems in many combat veterans. In Jungian terms:

> complexes are in fact "splinter psyches." The aetiology of their origin is frequently a so-called trauma, an emotional shock or some such thing, that splits off a bit of the psyche. Certainly one of the commonest causes is a moral conflict, which ultimately derives from the apparent impossibility of affirming the whole of one's nature. (Jung, 1948/1961, p. 98)

Given the previous evidence that moral injury exists and Jung's explicit acknowledgement that many of the complexes are caused by moral conflict, it follows that the psyche of a war combatant experiences a fissiparousness of the soul. These split off parts are autonomous: "once constellated and actualized, the complex can openly resist the intentions of the ego consciousness, shatter its unity, split off from it, and act as an animated foreign body in the sphere of consciousness" (Jacobi, 1959, p. 9). Once activated, the complex becomes autonomous, driving behavior on an unconscious level. From the Laika shamanic tradition war combatants experience a splitting off of a soul part. "Soul loss is a spiritual illness that causes emotional and physical disease"

(Ingerman, 1991, p. 1). Also, according to Ingerman (2004) symptoms of soul loss are "disassociation, PTSD, depression, illness, immune deficiency problems, unending grief and coma" (p. 9).

It is this splitting off of a soul part or a splitting resulting in an autonomous complex, that acts as the dismemberment. Here, I set aside the physical dismemberment of Osiris and warriors, not because physical dismemberment does not have its own concomitant psychological and moral implications, but rather to address the metaphorical dismemberment present in the Isis and Osiris myth. What, however, is this myth?

Isis and Osiris: Love, dismemberment, and re-membering. For this retelling of the Isis and Osiris myth, I rely on the accounts of Plutarch (120/1936), Campbell (2013), and Cott (1994). Plutarch's account of the myth is an attempt to frame the myth within a Greek pantheon. As such, I use Plutarch's account more as backstory and to a certain degree ancient color commentary. Campbell and Cott's aims here are different, they are working from translations of the myth and framing it mythologically. There are, like so many ancient myths, many translations and versions. This points towards an archetypal aspect of the myth. For the purposes of this work, the minor detail changes from the three versions are bracketed as they do not change the interpretation of the poems through the myth's lens. Specifically, the differences come down to the number of parts that Osiris was dismembered into. This minor difference in detail does not change its applicability to the current work. Each of the three authors cited choose different aspects of the myth to highlight their particular framing of the myth in their work. The general telling, details and chronology do not differ in any particular way that reduces the myth's applicability to the context used in this study.

Isis and Osiris are twins, "said to have fallen in love inside their mother's [Nut's] womb" (Cott, 1994, p. 3). However, they were more than twins, indeed they were "husband and wife, queen and king, goddess and god" (Cott, 1994, p. 3). Osiris, after gaining veneration across the land, sleeps with his brother Set's wife, mistaking her for Isis. This union resulted in the dog-headed son Anubis, the guide to the underworld. Set, enraged at his brother's perceived betrayal, plans his revenge. He creates a sarcophagus that only fits Osiris' body. Inviting Osiris to a great banquet, Set relays that whoever fits in the coffin can keep it as his gift. The various dinner guests try out the coffin to no avail, until Osiris climbs in. It fits him perfectly of course, but as he is lying there Set and 72 of his accomplices seal him into the coffin and launch it into the Nile whereupon the casket was swept out to sea, adrift. Osiris is killed, whether by drowning or by suffocation is not clear. Jung (1944/1980) tells us this portends the potential of a resurrection as Osiris' death is symbolic that "potentially at least, man is fully redeemed at the moment when the eternal Son of God returns again to the Father after undergoing the sacrificial death. The ideology of the mysterium is anticipated in the myths of Osiris, Orpheus, Donysus, and the Hercules" (pp. 306–307). One can imagine Osiris' death as a sacrifice of his morally transgressive self, the evil part of his Mercurius spirit sealed in a bottle awaiting the Master alchemist's work. Here, his split evil nature is encapsulated in a coffin bound with iron straps rather than a glass bottle, but the symbolism holds as Osiris' now dead body washes ashore at Byblos "where it comes to rest in the branches of a sapling tamarisk tree" (Cott, 1994, p. 10).

Osiris's journey across the sea in a coffin necessarily invokes the *nekiya* or night sea journey, a motif explored by Jung in detail across the collected works. Jung

explicitly invokes the night sea journey in relation to literature: see especially in relation to the Gilgamesh epos (Jung, 1935/1980, p. 107) and Odysseus (Jung, 1951/1956, p. 431). Jung also invokes the night sea journey in relation to Wagner's Die Walkure, the Rig Veda and Plato's Timaeus (Jung, 1951/1956, p. 358). An exhaustive explication of the night sea journey motif is outside the scope of this work: however, in addition to the above, Jung specifically calls Osiris' coffin sojourn down the Nile and across the sea to the salt marsh a night sea journey (1956, pp. 234–236). Further, Jung sees the nekiya as a portending of a descent to Hades: "a true nekiya, a descent into the Hades and a quest for the 'treasure hard to attain'" (1951/1959, p. 184) which is not just a trip into the abyss per se, but rather an opportunity to find one's treasure. This acknowledgment as to the ancient roots of the night journey motif is meant to affirm that Osiris is indeed on an archetypal journey beginning his death to the material world and with that I would like to turn once again to the myth and the images it invokes.

Osiris in a coffin, caught in the Tamarisk tree, is an image of a death caused by an immoral act, even though said act is presented as inadvertent. Osiris has lain with Set's wife Nephthys and conceived a child with her. So too, might our warriors inadvertently cause death in their soul by committing what their psyche perceives as an immoral act, even if such act was inadvertent. This could be so even if the motive for joining the military or war effort was a noble call to defend:

> Those boys were brave, we know
> But look where it got them
> Reduced to line after perfect line
> Of white stones….

So melt down the medals

Fuel the fire with paper poppies, war books and Arnie films

Stop playing the pipes, stop banging the drums. (Martin, 2008)

This theme of putrefaction is carried through in Egyptian representations of Osiris where his "skin can be black or green. These colors may originally have indicated putrefaction, but came to symbolize the connection of Osiris with a cycle of death and regeneration" (Pingh, 2002). Black or green skin, putrefaction, is the color of death. Green is also the color of crocodile skin which I will return to at the appropriate place of this myth in the context of possible forgiveness or redemption. For now, this color of death, at least in the Western world, is an indicator of soul death, emergent from an immoral act.

Osiris' death and the invocation of alchemical salt. Re-immersing back into the myth, Osiris has drifted into the branches of a tamarisk tree. This tree trunk is then said to grow over and completely subsume Osiris' casket within its trunk. "The tree conceals a great secret. The secret is hidden not in the top, but in the roots of the tree" (Jung 1942/1983, p. 195). This is a very curious image as a tamarisk tree is also known as salt cedar. "Salt cedar trees grow rampantly in the Middle East, Asia, and parts of Africa, accustomed to harsh landscapes with little rain….the brushy trees flourish in saline soils, their grey-green leaves rough-textured with salt. Scientists call the species Tamarix, but most people know it by the nickname 'salt cedar' or 'tamarisk'" (Lamberton, 2011). Here, the fact that the casket is caught by a bush or tree that thrives on salt intimates an alchemical connection for "he who works without salt will never raise dead bodies" (A. E. Waite, 1893/2010) and Osiris is indeed eventually resurrected.

Common salt, the material version, stings and burns when in contact with a wound. It can also soothe, in the sense of Epsom salts in a warm bath. In this case however, it is a literalization. The way of salt in *The Golden Tract* is metaphorical. Salt applied to a soul wound is the penance paid for an act or action anathema to soul. It reminds us that an immoral act hurts soul. This begins to answer the question: in moral injury is there the possibility of redemption or forgiveness? It also points to the telos of moral injury. Hillman (1989/1991) says "we may imagine our deep hurts not merely as wounds to be healed but as salt mines from which we gain a precious essence and without which the soul cannot live" (p. 125). Alchemically salt on the moral wound forces us to pay attention:

> Pain comes in many forms,
> The physical is just the physical but
> The anguish of my spirit beckons
> Solitary and silence and forgiveness of my soul. (M. J. Waite, 2010)

Suffering through salt of the soul points underground, the salt mine; an interior locus. Salt from moral injury experienced as an internal corrosion of soul. Off to the salt mines the saying goes. Down, down, down where every seeping wound suffers the sting of salt. Assaulting the psyche through every little fissure in the soul, desiccation and sting simultaneously applied, no respite. This descent into the suffering of the salt mine is not without the possibility of redemption "a trauma is a salt mine; it is a fixed place for reflection about the nature and value of my personal being" (Hillman, 2010, p. 126). Salt forces the soul to pay attention, to descend into one's memories and actions. Suffering precedes possible redemption. Redemption is not possible without guilt and suffering.

For if there is no guilt, no moral injury, then there is nothing to be redeemed. This is not to diminish the suffering of the warrior for "salt takes the details of its pain by remembering precisely and with piercing agony" (Hillman, 2010, p. 61).

We all have demons deep down inside

Mine just come alive when I close my eyes

I yell and holler and cuss and scream

I can't wake up from my violent dreams

Smoke burns my eyes, I see the face of the dead

The war is still raging inside my head (Carlsen, n.d.).

Salt corrodes the soul through moral suffering, yet redemption is possible as Albertus Magnus said: "salt is necessary for every solution" (Heines, 1958). Salt "burns in on itself with wit and bite, corrosive acrimony, making sense through self-accusation and self-purification" (Heines, p. 61). Thus, one telos of moral injury is salt suffering, yet it also offers redemption through the self-purification rituals of salt penance and salt ablution.

Other curious aspects of the tamarisk tree interlude.

Whenever a myth has a component that is incongruent with the material world, it is a sign to pay attention; the common as uncommon. The phenomenology of the Tamarisk tree shows that salt loving tree has alchemical considerations. However, that is not the only curious aspect of this image. For the proffered image has Osiris' sarcophagus completely subsumed into its trunk. This is an incongruent image as Tamarisk trees are not known for having large trunks. Instead, they are most often bushes that do not grow to any significant size. The ancient Egyptian depictions show

Osiris resting horizontally in his coffin suspended halfway up the trunk with the bushy part of the tree as a canopy over the coffin. This contradicts the fact that the king of Byblos, upon seeing the tree, had it cut down and the trunk used as a pillar support in his castle. Thus, there are two diametrically opposed images. If we accept the Egyptian art as definitive, a skinny trunk with the casket horizontally hanging out each end of a skinny trunk, then how did the king not see the coffin? Or, if the tree trunk is so impressively rotund as to be able to ensconce the entire coffin, then what does this say? Jung (1942/1983) would reply "among the many trees—the living elements that make up the forest—one tree is especially conspicuous for its great size" (p. 194). This tree is conspicuous for a reason much as the largest oak in the forest is conspicuous for hiding the immoral aspect of Mercurius in its roots.

The phenomenology of this tree does not matter in this image. These conflicting images instead point to something magical happening here. Indeed, the Axis Mundi would seem to be the symbolic meaning of this incongruity. The point is to focus on the tree, to understand that this tree represents that which connects the upper, middle and lower worlds. For now, Osiris's corporeal body is still in the material world, not yet lord of the underworld and yet a dead god, severed from the upper world in his death. "The evil spirit is imprisoned in the roots of the self, as the secret hidden in the principle of individuation" (Jung, 1942/1983, p. 247).

The beauty hides a cold malevolence,

A hideous, furtive hate?

That in the myriad pathways of the night,

Soon Death will hover (King, 1942).

Though Osiris is lying in death, the victim of cold malevolence, he is remembered by Isis. Taken at face value, if the tree trunk is gigantically out of proportion in order to engulf Osiris' casket, then this points to time and timelessness. The number of years required to grow a trunk that large in a tree not known for its girth could be centuries or longer, revealing the timelessness of Truth as symbolized in the Axis Mundi. Birth, death and renewal. The timelessness of love exemplified by Isis' search for Osiris out of timeless love for her consort. Eventually Isis' love and focus divines Osiris' location in the Byblos king's castle.

Osiris' resurrection and the conceiving of Horus. Although there is an interlude between Isis searching for Osiris and her securing his body it will not be explicated as the implications do not have significance for this study. What is significant is that Isis, through the divining magic of a child, learns the location of Osiris. This parallels the boy finding the buried bottle with Mercurius under the oak's roots. In both cases, it is Puer that finds Mercurius bottled up. This points to new life, a new soul that comes from the cycle of life, death and life.

The parallels between myth, alchemy and folklore are striking pointing towards the archetypal. It would seem to this author that folklore is a rewriting of myth and alchemy perhaps driven by a need to pass along ancient truths in a time when it is dangerous to confront the religious orthodoxy. Much like the alchemists obscuring what they were working on through symbols and arcane references, folklore frames ancient myths in a contemporary vernacular.

> We need gods—Thor or Zeus or Krishna or Jesus or, well, God—not so much to worship or sacrifice to, but because they satisfy our need—distinctive from that of

> all the other animals—to imagine a meaning, a sense to our lives, to satisfy our hunger to believe that the muck and chaos of daily existence does, after all, tend somewhere. *It's the origin of religion, and also of storytelling—or aren't they both the same thing?* [emphasis added] (McConnell, 1996, p. 2)

Here the folklore teller functions much like a court jester: placing the truth into a story of a boy holds the storyteller apart from the work's truth. One can almost hear the storyteller saying, if confronted by an ecclesiastical court, "It's just a fairytale!" These strong parallels between ancient myth, alchemy and folklore tend to confirm Jung and others observation that all of these stories point toward an archetypal truth.

Turning back to our myth, Isis is successful in persuading the King to let her have Osiris' body. She takes the body to the swampy delta as "Isis is terribly afraid of Set, who has taken the throne" (Campbell, 2013, p. 97). There, she uses the magic of love to resurrect Osiris and conceive. "Horus, the son of Osiris, is begotten of Osiris while he is dead" (Campbell, 2013, p. 95). Here, the message is very clear, new life and resurrection are possible, even for those whose soul might be dead from moral injury. The required ingredient is love, particularly feminine love. "Empedocles calls the Beneficient Principle 'Love' and 'Friendship,' and frequently too, 'Harmony'" (Plutarch, 120/1936, p. 42). From this union, new life is possible, a redeemed warrior soul is possible:

> But maybe God[dess] will cause to be—
>
> Who brought forth sweetness from the strong
>
> Out of our discords harmony
>
> Sweeter than bird's song. (Vernede, 1917/1998, p. 107)

Osiris dismembered and remembered. Isis is raising Horus and tending to Osiris' corporeal remains in the delta. Unfortunately Set is out hunting with "our chthonic friend boar with down-turned tusks who represents death and resurrection" (Campbell, 2013, p. 95). The boar leads Set into the delta and "when Isis had gone to see her son Horus (who was at nurse in the city of Buto), and had put the coffer away, Typhon [Set] being out hunting by moonlight came upon it and recognizing the corpse, tore it into *fourteen* pieces, and scattered them abroad" (Plutarch, 120/1936, p. 15).

There's a tear in the fabric of his being

… Where the memories lie waiting to remind him

… Of the horror and the carnage

That is cataloged as war

Which civilians never see (Breska, n.d.).

As a side note, various versions of the myth relate a different number of parts Osiris is rendered into with some stating 13, 14, or 15 parts. I am unaware of whether the number of pieces is numerologically important to ancient Egyptians or not. Given the various numbers are different and no particular importance is attributed by the translations of the myth, I bracket out this aspect and do not pursue it further.

Osiris has now suffered a two-fold death. The first death through his mistaken congress with Nephytys and the second through dismemberment.

Bodies, fearful now, will cringe and press

Close to the heart of earth;

That Hell will burst through Heaven, the wild, mad cry,

A devil's scream of terrifying mirth

As foul destruction thunders down the sky. (King, 1942)

Isis' love magic had successfully restored Osiris to allow the conception of Horus, showing that new life is possible through remembrance and love. In the depths of the morally injured soul, this is an important juncture. The warrior through remembering, soul salt and love can sprout the seeds of new life or he may be lost in self-loathing, rage and salt suffering. In the latter case fracturing and soul dismemberment may occur. Set, representing chaos "gets out of control, as it does in real life, and it overcomes the principles of harmonious existence, which are Osiris" (Cott, 1994, p. 29). Redemption is still possible of course. Isis's love is absolute and can, and does, overcome Set's rather Titanic rage. The search may be long but the magic of timeless love conquers chaos.

Upon learning that Osiris' body has been dismembered and flung far and wide, Isis is devastated. She engages Nephytys and Anubis (Horus' half-brother from Osiris' illicit union with Nephytys) in a search for Osiris' parts. Anubis uses his jackal nose to help find the dismembered fragments of Osiris. The group is successful in finding all but Osiris' phallus which having been thrown into the Nile where the fish "lepidotus, phagrus, and oxyrynchus had fed upon it" (Plutarch, 120/1936, p. 15). The lack of phallus, in my contextual interpretation of the morally injured veteran, is that sexual love is impotent, what is needed is Eros. This is a crucial distinction: love of self, love by others and "love [of] thy neighbor as you love thyself" (Mark 12:31). Here I have moved from Eros to agape. From the individual to the redemptive potential of love outside the self. This is not an easy task for the war combatant for he must see his former enemy through a new lens: redemption possible through love of other. This is the basis of Edward Tick's work, looking the former enemy in the eye and seeing humanity in each

other. Mark's guidance suggests a transcendental possibility. If you love thy neighbor as yourself, then you love yourself as God loves you, for your neighbor is but a representative of Christ on earth. This calls you to recognize your moral transgression(s) and understand that the dragon you slew was no dragon whatsoever. Rather than an evil enemy honorably engaged in defense of self, family, or friend, it is instead a fellow human being worthy of love and the demonized Other was made so by those with discordant agendas.

With the far-flung pieces re-membered by Isis, Anubis steps into the role of priest and embalms Osiris' body. Embalming the body is preparation for the boat to the afterlife, a form of resurrection. Resurrection is a form of re-membering, of life after death (Campbell, 2013, p. 97). A lantern lit in the darkness, showing the way home for the deadened soul, re-membered and re-birthed in a redemptive act of love, resurrection through child.

> After all I have endured,
>
> And the fact that I'm always there
>
> There bids an argument – A quarrel,
>
> That I'm so lucky to still be here alive,
>
> To be tending my children,
>
> And still, be living life! (M. J. Waite, 2010)

Anubis, in his role as priest prepares the body for resurrection. Horus, Osiris' other child also participates. He offers Set combat and defeats him over many individual battles. "In battle [Horus] lost an eye. The eye is called the eye of Horus and is regarded as the

sacrifice that resurrected Osiris that gave him immortal life" (Campbell, 2013, p. 98). Children symbolizing new life, metaphorically timeless life, life without ending.

Backtracking to a prior allusion, that of Osiris' skin portrayed as either black or green in Egyptian poetry is condign at this point. Though Osiris has been resurrected once again by the love of Isis, Nephytys, and his children, there is one more test left: the weighing of the heart against a feather. Here, the meaning is laid raw: those whose hearts are heavier than a feather are not deemed worthy of spiritual immortality "otherwise a demonic alligator monster will consume the person." Thus, the warrior's heart must be lifted to near weightlessness, emerge from its salt suffering and be redeemed with a clear conscience and heart. Only then can suffering be held in abeyance and the re-membered soul become resurrected. Otherwise, the demonic monster will consume the soul—endless salt suffering. Kabalsis (as cited in Jung, 1944/1980) said "as Kings, when they bring a gift to God, bear it themselves and do not permit to be borne by others" (p. 313). Here, the warrior must weigh his heart before the gods to be deemed worthy of resurrection. In this task, she must show herself to be worthy to participate in the divine. "For if God 'dignatus est' to become partaker of human nature then man may also deem himself worth to become partaker of the divine nature" (Jung, 1944/1980, p. 312). Osiris, begotten of the gods, his evil nature spirited into hiding, has been remembered and re-membered by Isis. His evil, immoral act raised to consciousness by his totality. Isis in the lens presented here acting as the feminine component of his totality. These "contrary natures are often called *Mercurius, sensu striction and Sulphu*r [salt], the former being feminine, earth and Eve, and the latter masculine, water and Adam" (Jung, 1942/1983, p. 268). Salt suffering of the masculine giving way to the redemption of feminine Spirit

"*vulgaris* he is the dead masculine body, but as 'our' Mercurius he is spiritual, alive and life giving" (Jung, 1942/1983, p. 268).

Across the Threshold: From Moral Injury to Redemption

Poiesis through poetic, lyrical images. The psychological effects of combat have long been recorded, from pre-written forms expressed as images on cave walls to classical poetry, myths, the Bible through to modernity and the poetry studied here. Poetry and the invoked imagery was used in this study as "everything is only metaphor; there is only poetry" (Brown, 1966, p. 276). For Hillman, images are, psychologically, what we need to be looking at: "All consciousness depends on these images. Everything else—the ideas of the mind, sensations of the body, perceptions of the world around us, beliefs, feelings, hunger—must present themselves as images in order to become experienced (Hillman, 1975, p. 23).

Here it is these images evoked by the reading of these veterans' poetry that I have used to adumbrate moral injury. Words function as lyrics and now these lyrics are building images in my mind. As a two-time combat veteran I can identify with these images, contemplate them and relate to them.

These poets bring into the world their salt suffering, painting images in poetry and prose, a bringing into focus the suffering of many war combatants. This poiesis, this aletheia of soul suffering is one attempt to express the archon of moral injury. Poetry from the psycho-therapeutic perspective "enriches the encounter by allowing the patient to identify with other human beings, who experienced similar conflicts, anxieties and feelings, and who have been able to state, for all humanity, a universal theme or dilemma" (Berger, 1969, p. 75). This ability to light the lantern of suffering, the courage

to bring it into the world, to allow those still in the salt mines of soul suffering to remember and re-member. “That’s me” one can hear whispered on the wind. These poets, then, point to one telos of moral injury.

On the question of moral injury. The sacrifice that citizens make when they serve in their country’s military is not simply the risk of death, dismemberment, disfigurement and paralysis….they risk losing sense that human virtues are still possible. These are psychological and moral injuries—war wounds (Shay, 2002, p. 33). This is the opening scene of this thesis: that war wounds can manifest as moral injury as exhibited in the poetry of war veterans.

In conclusion, the primary research question has been answered in the affirmative inasmuch as those combatants who write poetry in this sample exemplify one constituent of the warrior class and their poetry expresses the ontology of moral injury. The indicators of moral injury are clear. The poetry exhibits fairly consistent themes aligned with the concept of moral injury: the inability to process inhumane actions conducted in time of war. This conclusion itself is not too surprising considering the growing literature regarding the concept. What is interesting however, is that this is consistent across all of the wars inclusive to this study. For instance: World War II is often held out as a good, just war. Thus, I would have expected to find little confirmation of moral injury in these poems. This did not appear to be the case. Though the tonality of World War II poetry exhibited a lesser degree of suffering than say the Vietnam War poetry, moral injury was still present. This surprise was also prevalent in the Gulf War poetry, another war that was largely portrayed as a just war. This finding contradicts the general

media and popular culture bias towards portraying them as morally just wars that resulted in little suffering on the part of veterans.

All of the poetry in this study were written by either British or American authors, save one. The one exception was a translation into English by a Greek poet. In fact, the samples were split almost equally between British and American authors. This opened the opportunity to examine whether British and American war poets had a significant deviation from each other. Emanating from this examination is another surprise: British and American poets are evenly split in terms of their poetry exhibiting moral injury. There is much further work to be completed in comparing say Russian, German, Italian and other poets in the context of war poetry and moral injury. This is reiterated in the future directions section.

Remembering. With the main hypothesis confirmed, perhaps more interesting questions arise: what is the telos of moral injury and what does that say about possible redemption or forgiveness? Redemption and forgiveness requires us to look at the etiology of moral injury. "The imperative of thinking is to keep thinking; the imperative of a vision is to keep looking at things" (Marías, 1967, p. 52). This requires us to keep hearing the warrior's suffering story through the ages and its implication to the soul. For a moral transgression implies that for the soul to heal, there must be some form of redemption or forgiveness available. Edward Tick's pioneering efforts to bring Vietnam War veterans back to Vietnam, reconciling them with their former enemies intimates that some form of redemption is possible. This led to viewing these questions through a mytho-poetic lens. Two things became clear—a yearning for being remembered and a need for these poets' souls to be re-membered.

Remembering was explored through the kaleidoscope of goddess myth. Atē reminds us that there is not only a call to adventure in the hero's journey but a call to descent. To be caught in Atē's embrace can lead to an ever-increasing spiral down, a destructive love affair that threatens one's sanity. In this lens, Atē's potentially destructive embrace serves as the call to pay attention and take heroic action. Recognizing her embrace is one telos of moral injury: the recognition of self-destructive thoughts and behaviors.

If Atē awakens the war poet, it is Necessity that drives the creative fire. Necessity is so overpowering that even Ares ignores her at his own peril. Necessity invokes another aspect of moral injury telos: the need to create, to express, to remember. Remembrance in turn invokes Mnemosyne. As Pausanias relates, Mnemosyne is a key component of consulting the healing oracle of Trophonius. Remembering flows both ways, not only are war poets asking to be remembered, but Mnemosyne demands their sharing of their memories: both the war poet's suffering as well as the Oracle's healing words expressed in words and written down for posterity. Ariadne also plays a part in this exploration of the telos of suffering, of remembrance. For it is Ariadne that shows the hero the way back after combat. The combatant must encounter and slay the dragon on his own, but it is Ariadne that holds the string of his sanity to pull him back from the monster encounter and restore him to civil sanity. Remembering one's internal suffering, remembering the way back, remembering in the spirit of written expression in the larger written service of humanity, this is one multi-faceted aspect of the telos of moral injury.

Re-membering. If Remembering was situated in Greek goddesses, Re-membering is situated in an Egyptian goddess. Isis and Osiris' myth addresses the

possibility of forgiveness or redemption from moral injury. Why Isis and not a Greek god or goddess? Christine Downing explains that "forgiveness was not a big deal virtue among the Greeks" (Downing, 2018). Mercy [Compassion] may have some applicability, but she does not forgive nor redeem: compassion for one's suffering is not the same as redemption from the underlying act, nor is forgiveness. However, there is redemption available in a reading of the myth of Isis and Osiris.

Osiris is dismembered by a rival—an act manifested by Osiris' immoral lying with Set's wife. Metaphorically this represents our war poet's dismembered soul, in Jung's vernacular: a disassociation into multiple complexes without a coherent center. Salt suffering is the necessary antecedent to Osiris' re-membering. Salt suffering is here represented by a saline loving axis mundi enveloping Osiris' coffer. This envelopment of Osiris represents homeostasis in death, a metaphorical suspension between the upper and lower worlds, the material of suffering. The somatic meat is preserved, embalmed as it is with salt. Salt suffering of the mind until the redemptive love of Isis and his sons bring Osiris across the threshold of his death. This *rememberment* fruits, with Osiris now the lord of the underworld, death, but also re-birth. The fruit of the growing cycle: birth in spring, then growth and death through summer and fall when the fruit in its falling scatters its seed of life to be reborn after the long winter. It is through death, soul dismemberment, salt suffering and re-birth from the moral wound that redemption becomes possible for the warrior. It is a perilous road and requires the civilizing component of feminine love that is offered to those suffering war combatants suffering.

Implications for treatment of the morally injured combat veteran. In the initial discussion of these results I alluded to the recognition that the differences between

moral injury and PTSD had implications for treatment modalities. When I first started exploring this topic in 2009, Litz et al. (2009) had just written their first paper proposing moral injury as a possibility. At that time, the general consensus was that moral injury could not be treated by conventional, VA approved therapies such as PE and cognitive processing therapy (CPT). Instead they averred that moral injury was something that only the veteran on her or his own, or preferably in conjunction with other veterans, had to work on outside of the typical evidenced based therapies. This comports with the alchemists who cautioned that only by working alone could the lapis philosophorum be achieved. However, Litz et al. did believe that PE and CPT were effective for treating the symptopms of co-morbid PTSD. Since that time, Litz and Maguen (n.d.) have tempered that initial belief by combining some components of PE into a treatment framework. However, one must take into account that both work for VA at the National Center for PTSD. In this context, it is not inconceivable that they are proposing this type of treatment in order to reach a wider constituency of suffering veterans while operating under a VA that accepts only evidence-based therapies.

In my personal experience, many veterans and especially those potentially suffering from moral injury, have a mistrust of military and VA affiliated psychologists and psychiatrists. This stems from a long history of VA psychologists and psychiatrists who either do not have the veteran's long term mental and emotional best interests at heart or for the possibility of their official service records being tagged with a diagnosis that can later come back to haunt them in the civilian world. The first item I have listed may sound harsh to those practicing in the VA system. However, it is not just grounded in suspicion and rumor. Often times the VA psychiatrists and psychologists are in an

adversarial role in disability claims. Their job is to fairly evaluate these claims, yet often, as noted in the literature review, there is great societal and governmental pressure to dismiss claimants as frauds. For examples, see Phillips (2018) and Zarembo (2014).

Given the above distrust and I believe, major differences between PTSD symptoms that can be effectively treated with current evidence-based therapies and moral injury treatment remain. In the intervening years between the initial proposal of moral injury as a separately identifiable mental condition in combat veterans and the present, a new peer reviewed literature has bloomed. Today, many of the proposed treatments emphasize religious and spiritual components of care. Along these lines see Powers (2017), Yan (2016), Worthington and Langberg (2012), and Larson (2015). The great differentiator between PTSD and moral injury treatment modalities is the loci of the injury. Moral injury seems to be concentrated on interiority with its major component in guilt, whether over a specific incident, a series of incidents or the overall propriety of war itself. This is captured in just war theologies—there would be no reason to morally and theologically justify a war if there was not a perceived moral transgression in participation. This is amplified in Jung (1942/1983) "since without guilt there is no moral consciousness and without awareness of differences no consciousness at all" (p. 197). PTSD and its VA approved therapies, however, are focused outwardly on singular events. For example, the death of a fellow soldier or the horrific blowing up of a civilian. This is an exteriority orientation that responds to conditioning. Given these differences, this indicates that Litz et al. (2009) were initially correct, at least within the context of a VA system constrained by evidence-based therapies. The recent recognition of moral injury and the move into pastoral or spiritual care modalities feels more authentic, at least

in the early stages of treatment. The preceding is preferred with the understanding that moral injury can present co-morbidly with any number of conditions that current treatment effectively and efficiently handles. Thus, I am not here drawing a line and saying that only spiritual-religious approaches will work on the moral injury, rather I suggest that often religious and spiritual leaders are grounded deeply in the moral questions confronting suffering war combatants.

Casting stones in the pond: Ripples of future work in moral injury. The literature and research into moral injury from the psychological perspective is in its infancy. This work adds a new stone to the cairn of knowledge, each rock balanced carefully on the work of others. Looking to the future, there are three major areas where the work could push the frontiers of scholarship: (a) working along the lines of Janet Piaget (1932), Lawrence Kohlberg (1984), and James R. Rest (1979) a scale of moral injury could be developed, (b) expanding the scope of moral injury from its beginnings in veteran mental health to other areas such as forcible rape and, (c) exploring the intersection of the spiritual and psychological elements of moral injury.

Though not explored in this work, it seems apparent that a scale of moral injury along the lines of Piaget's (1932) initial work and Kohlberg's (1984) further refinement is possible. In the hermeneutical study of the poems present in the current work, there exists evidence that such a scale of injury could be discerned: both on the total number of moral injury themes evident in a poem as well as to the qualitative horror being described. The development of such a scale might help clinicians to tailor treatment modalities and protocols to match the level of harm.

As covered in the literature review of this work, the current diagnostic of PTSD as applied to the veteran population actually derived from work with female victims of forcible rape. The psychological literature on moral injury has developed along the back azimuth, from veterans to? An interesting approach would be to research victims of rape to ascertain if moral injury, as currently defined is applicable. If not, how might the definition be expanded to include such experiences?

Though briefly touched upon in the literature review, moral injury is much more prevalent in the theological and spiritual spheres. Extending the work of moral injury might benefit from the intersection of theology, spirituality and psychology. As Jung (1948/1961) rightly noted, there is a spiritual function of the psyche and theology is exclusively devoted to spiritual functioning. From this it follows that a deeper examination of these intersecting schools of thought is warranted. A potentially fruitful line of inquiry would follow the morality of war from a biblical and catechism perspective: beginning with the Old Testament, continuing through Aquinas' Just War Theory through modern times. This historical perspective could be examined through modern application of theologies moral injury lens.

These additional lines of inquiry are not exhaustive. Rather, they are articulated here to stimulate intellectual curiosity about moral injury. The psychological literature today is in its infancy. Perhaps these thoughts can carry the work forward.

Polysemous thoughts. Moral injury exists, at least within the context of this study and through its hermeneutical lens. It is through death, remembering, salt suffering, re-membering and rebirth that moral injury manifests of Necessity. The goddesses hold the lamp that shines through the salt suffering of the dismembered

combatants, reminding them that re-memberance is possible, redemption is possible. It is a perilous journey indeed, but one well worth it.

Mytho-poetics and poetics in general have been manifestly critical to this study and my own journey home therefore I cannot have the last words, the poets must:

To the War Poets

All the words they've bitten out of war
And written down in shaking hand with blood
Half whiskey, or, in grim mastery of self,
Pronounced above the paper's breaking heart,
That they believed would free them from their dark
Solitaire with truth by freeing truth
From its heavy cradle in their brains and flood
The dim acre of the human soul with its glow,
They've torn in vain from the body of their suffering,
To no good end they bit the heart from the corpse
Of their innocence and kept its taste alive,
For nowhere is there courage and compassion enough
To drink with open eyes from such a cup.
The poems were just a way to stay alive. (Hopkins, 2017)

Hopkins poem speaks to the early stages of the work, this poem itself points towards Ate's grip and descent. D. H. Lawrence (1992) invokes descent and coping yes, but also forgiveness of self and others as well as hinting at redemption:

I am not a mechanism, an assembly of various sections.

And it is not because the mechanism is working wrongly, that I am ill.
I am ill because of wounds to the soul, to the deep emotional self
and the wounds to the soul take a long, long time, only time can help
and patience, and a certain difficult repentance
long difficult repentance, realization of life's mistake, and the freeing oneself
from the endless repetition of the mistake
which mankind at large has chosen to sanctify

Vanessa Zurita (2009) completes the circle, from descent and forgiveness to the possibility of redemption:

The water carries me
Moonlight guides the waves
Stars winking light
I sit in it, naked in the night
Rocking with the motion
Twinkling as one,
The stars and I—
a maudlin, looking at the sky
Alone, among my coterie
Melting into the sea,
Fusing with the sand,
Turning with the wind,
Rising with the tide
My breasts swell, floating in the soft waves

My tresses form curls around my face

My own redemption

My sins washed from me

My own redemption.

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Appendix

World War I

R. E. Vernede.

A Listening Post

The sun's a red ball in the oak
And all the grass is grey with dew,
A while ago a blackbird spoke –
He didn't know the world's askew.

And yonder rifleman and I
Wait here behind the misty trees
To shoo the first man that goes by,
Our rifles ready on our knees.

How could he know that if we fail
The world may lie in chains for years
And England be a bygone tale
And right be wrong, and laughter tears?

Strange that this bird sits there and sings
While we must only sit and plan –
Who are so much the higher things –
The murder of our fellow man…

But maybe God will cause to be –

Who brought forth sweetness from the strong

Out of our discords harmony

Sweeter that bird's song. (Vernede, 1917/1998, p. 107)

Isaac Rosenberg.

The Immortals

I killed them, but they would not die.

Yea! All the day and all the night

For them I could not rest nor sleep,

Nor guard from them nor hide in flight.

Then in my agony I turned

And made my hands red in their gore.

In vain – for faster than I slew

They rose more cruel than before.

I killed and killed with slaughter mad;

I killed till all my strength was gone.

And still they rose to torture me,

For Devils only die in fun.

I was used to the Devil hid

In women's smiles and wine's carouse.

I called him Satan, Balzebub.

But now I call him, dirty louse. (Rosenberg, 19171998, p. 146)

Wilfred Owen.

Dulce et Decorum Est

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,

Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,

Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs

And towards our distant rest began to trudge.

Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots

But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;

Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots

Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,

Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;

But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,

And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime…

Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,

As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,

He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace

Behind the wagon that we flung him in,

And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood

Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,

Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,

My friend you would tell with such high zest

The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est

Pro patria mori. (Owen, 1918/1998, p. 161)

World War II

Namur King.

Ode to the Full Moon During an "Alert"

Full moon, brilliant, all-revealing, quiescent,

Spirit of silver silence, soul of night,

I have waited since the first pale crescent

Of your nascent beauty touched the world with light;

I have watched the envious stars grow dimmer;

Orion's girdle faintly glimmer,

Fading beyond your fair translucency.

And, now, the earth, resplendent, caught in dreams,

The incarnation of those long desires,

Her woods aflame with lambent fires,

Her diaphanous streams

Transcended by a deep tranquillity….

Thus I, the poet, extol with eloquence

The full moon's loveliness

And light,

Her calm magnificence;

Dreams of a happy lover!

How, then, can I confess

The beauty hides a cold malevolence,

A hideous, furtive hate?

That, in the myriad pathways of the night,

Soon Death will hover,

Death indiscriminate?

Bodies, fearful now, will cringe and press

Close to the heart of earth;

That Hell will burst through Heaven, the wild, mad cry,

A devil's scream of terrifying mirth,

As foul destruction thunders down the sky;

A crashing, cataclysmic violence

That shatters babies at their hour of birth,

Dispassionately, age and innocence!

Moon, ally of hate and man's vile desecrations,

No more the world will know your madrigals,

But, be the symbol of the shame of nations

Until the last star falls. (King, 1942)

Walter Benton.

Summary of the Distance Between the Bomber and the Objective

The duraluminum dove dives—

How slenderly

space splits—the momentum doubles, multiplies,

the dynamite muscles flex for sudden violence!

Beautiful…beautiful to see against the sky

of flying birds—

against the soft, wide, lavender eyes of morning!

There, proud Caucasian—chemist, poet, lover,

scholar, priest: behold the stark embodiment

of the millennia of mind—myth and mechanical,

prophetic, proved…

(Euclid's theorems, Phidas's chiseled curves,

the Flood, redemption—and the Song of Songs,

Rembrandt, Beethoven, Steinmetz, Plato, Christ)—

all the oldest principles, all the latest

features capusuled in a swift and shining shape..

blown out of context and material time!

bringing peace to many. (Benton, 1941)

Odysseus Elytis.

Heroic and Elegiac Song for the Lost Second Lieutenant of the Albanian Campaign

For those men night was a more bitter day

They melted iron, chewed the earth

Their God smelled of gunpowder and mule-hide

Each thunderclap was death riding the sky

Each thunderclap a man smiling in the face

Of death – let fate say what she will.

Suddenly the moment misfired and struck courage

Hurled splinters head-on into the sun

Binoculars, sights, mortars, froze with terror.

Easily, like calico that the wind rips

Easily, like lungs that stones have punctured

The helmet rolled to the left side…

For one moment only roots shook in the soil

Then the smoke dissolved and the day tried timidly

To beguile the infernal tumult.

But night rose up like a spurned viper

Death paused one second on the brink –

Then struck deeply with his pallid claws.

Now with a still wind in his quiet hair

A twig of forgetfulness at his left ear

He lies on the scorched cape

Like a garden the birds have suddenly deserted

Like a song gagged in the darkness

Like an angel's watch that has stopped

Eyelashes barely whispered goodbye

And bewilderment became rigid…

He lies on the scorched cape

Black ages around him

Bay at the terrible silence with dogs' skeletons

And hours that have once more turned into stone pigeons

Listen attentively:

But laughter is burnt, earth has grown deaf,

No one heard that last, that final cry

The whole world emptied with that very last cry

Beneath the five cedars

Without other candles

He lies on the scorched cape.

The helmet is empty, the blood full of dirt,

At his side the arm half shot away

And between the eyebrows –

Small bitter red-black-spring

Spring whose memory freezes.

O do not look O do not look at the place where life

Where life has left him. Do not say how the smoke of dawn has

Do not say how the smoke of dawn has risen

This is the way one moment this is the way

This is the way one moment deserts the other

And this is the way the all-powerful suddenly deserts the world. (1995)

Korean War

Anonymous.

The Sixteen Hundred

Not a bugle was heard, not a funeral beat,

Or even a drum sounding retreat.

As over the ice the corpse was carried,

To the hill where those “G.I.’s” are buried.

Six foot by two foot by one foot deep,

On a Korean hillside they sleep.

Both young and old, perhaps one wonders why?

These 1600 had to die.

No little white cross with their name,

But then they are not buried in shame.

Although they are in unknown graves,

“Sixteen Hundred,” American Braves.

No useless casket enclosed their breast,

It is “G.I.” clothing for their last rest.

All colors of men: Blacks, Browns, and Whites,

Now “Sixteen Hundred” faded lights.

A pill, a powder, medicine of any kind,

Or, should we say a stronger mind;

Could have saved them from yonder hill,

Those “Sixteen Hundred,” now laying still.

In their illness, tossing and turning,

Most of them knew there would be no returning.

Some went easy, some with pain,

Did these “Sixteen Hundred” die in vain?

When we go home to enjoy our fill,

They are still there on that lonely hill.

Forgotten by some, yet remembered by most,

They will be "The Sixteen Hundred" in their last post.

Donald A. Chase

Unwanted memories.

Often when I sit alone, and twilight fills the sky,

I find myself recalling scenes from other years gone by.

Memories of Korea still clutter up my head,

those dreary days and hellish nights, and my friends, long dead.

The many hills we fought through, which never seemed to end,

and all the while the fear inside, of death around the bend.

The clashes with the enemy, who sometimes fled away,

but, for every hill we won, someone had to pay.

Maybe one was lucky, when a bullet found an arm;

for a little while, at least, you were safe from harm.

My mind recalls the icy weather, when diseases took their toll,

when frozen feet were common, from winter's numbing cold.

The trench line with its bunkers and grimy faces there

where if you were observant, you saw the burnt-out stare.

The pathway from the trenches that led to no-man's land,

a torn and barren piece of ground, destroyed by human hand.

Always, there were those who fell, never to arise,

and to this day, I still can see the shock in startled eyes.

These vivid pictures locked inside, although they do not show,

never seem to leave my thoughts, no matter where I go. (Chase, n.d.)

Anthony J. DeBlasi

Our War

Great Depression babies, we

Came into the world

With Frankenstein and Dracula.

Too young for World War II,

Too old for Vietnam,

Between 1950 and '53

We said goodbye to family,

"So long," to friends, "I'll see ya,"

And headed for Korea.

"The Great War" is one that

Some of our fathers fought in.

Uncles, older brothers went to fight

In the "Good War."

In time, nephews and sons

Would fight in Vietnam,

And grandkids would attack

In Afghanistan and Iraq.

But we, the Great Depression small fry,

When we came of age,

Went to fight a “Forgotten War”

On a tiny spit of land

On the other side of the world,

Whose hills and mountains

Burst into fire and blood

In the summer of 1950--

Where over 36,000 brothers in arms

Spent the last day of their short lives,

And many more lost limb or mind--

And where 30,000 of our soldiers

On Korean soil today

Face the same enemy, each day.

In this “Land of the Morning Calm,”

No, *Mourning* Calm --

Lorded over by Chinese,

Savaged by the Japanese,

Ravaged by World War II --

Ever looking for a brighter future,

A gentle people, constantly misled,

Got hell instead.

When the shooting stopped,

Was it victory or stalemate?

After more than 50 years,

Some still wonder --

Why, *why* all that blood,

The unspeakable holocaust,

The infinite pain?

Was it all in vain?

Let no one doubt the outcome

Of that fight:

We put the murderous invaders back

Where they belonged,

And answered the respective quests

Of Kim and Mao and Joe

With ***No!*** and ***No!*** and **No!**

More: we helped the people of the south

Show their northern kinfolk and the world

The success of people set free

From fear and tyranny.

In every grateful heart --

Given a chance to live on their own terms,

Spared from further bomb and bullet,

Lord and sword --

We have our reward. (DeBlasi, 2005)

Vietnam War

Dennis Underwood

Long Binh, 1969

We'd been over-run,

All of us killed.

That was what the Times said

In big HEADLINE letters.

But they were wrong.

We were fine, just fine.

So they let everybody

Make one call home

From the one phone on the base.

After almost an hour

My turn came.

The operator put the call through

To make sure I talked to you.

After several rings,

The operator in the States said

“I’m sorry no one answers,

Maybe no one’s home.”

Then I heard our operator say,

“But someone has to be home

This is a call from Viet Nam!”

And you picked up the phone. (Underwood, 2015)

Doug D’Elia

PTSD in a Vietnamese Restaurant

I can’t take my eyes off my

Vietnamese waiter, mid-forties,

boney shoulders, thin hips,

speaking in that all too familiar

broken English.

Who’s your Daddy?

Did I fight him in the war?

Were you with the bad guys?

Did your parents wear the

black pajamas?

What's that noise
coming from the kitchen?
Who are those men,
shuffling around?
I see them, when
the kitchen door
swings open
getting ready
in those all too familiar
hats, fixing bayonets,
talking in that all too
familiar language.

I can see my waiter,
the informant,
in the kitchen
talking with the soldiers
pointing my way,
like Judas in the garden
of Gethsemane.

I see their sandals and boots

from under my table,

running around the room.

Searching. Customers shouting

in Vietnamese, tables being over

turned like Jesus in the Temple.

My waiter pulling back the white

table cloth, exposing my

hiding place.

“Sir! Sir! You order now?” (D’Elia, 2016)

John Breska

After the War

There’s a tear in the fabric of his being

... Where the memories lie waiting to remind him

... Of the horror and the carnage

That is cataloged as war

Which civilians never see

For it’d shatter their reality

And leave them in a state of what

To call it I don’t know

But it’s tipped the balance

Of the G I Joe

Who comes to calmer waters

Where life's normal once again

But he's having trouble fitting in

For he's shaken bad internally;

it's a price they paid for defending

But the dreams are never ending. (Breska, n.d.)

Desert Storm (SW/Asia)

Jenny Linn Loveland

Driving

Whenever I see a yard, trim and fresh,

not fenced; the fire-red

hydrant, talons stretched

in every direction – flashing flags;

whenever I hear the stop – start

whir, the bicycling scythes

mowing tall grass, the sprinklers

tick and pulse, that thrum;

I taste lush green shadows the hoses left,

and I breathe newly

sliced grass, filaments rising

with dandelion manes – summer's flotsam;

and revisit the smells: scalding desert air;

dark tar broiled; metal blades blasting night;

the dunes orange, Bedouin shadows flickering – all mirage.

Whenever I see a yard, not fenced, I keep

driving past the tread and worry clenched;

the sweat of neighbors sipping beer. (Loveland, 2015)

Michael J. Waite

I Veteran

I try,

Ten maybe fifteen years in a row to attend

It has been! I walk past at speed,

Anxiety rising within a throat of hurt,

My jaw clenched as I negotiate the crowd -

But my stride is slowed and I catch glimpses

Of the veterans in uniform,

And my tears are checked beneath

A stonewashed face.

Pain comes in many forms,

The physical is just the physical but

The anguish of my spirit beckons

Solitary and silence and forgiveness of my soul,

Why is it so hard to join them?

Why can I not share my grief with those -

Who offered sacrifice?

Why is the eleventh hour of the eleventh day

Of the eleventh month so painful -

That I die inside every year the last post is sound

From a melancholy horn?

I guess I may never know within the

Confines of my guilt,

For as war beckons every lad - an adventurer,

There is a silent fortune of tears inside for the

Lives ceased so quickly,

And maybe,

After all I have endured,

And the fact I'm always there

There bids an argument - A quarrel,

That I'm so lucky to still be here alive,

To be tending to my children,

And still, be living life! (Waite, 2010)

A. J. Battley

I am what I am, or am I?

What do you think people what do you see

What do you think when you look at me

A miserable old man deemed not very wise

Uncertain of habit with faraway eyes.

I am what I am but not what I was

The GP's say it's me, or is it ME

Now they say it's PTSD

But that's not me nor who I was.

I worked so hard to become what I was

And I was proud to be what I became

But something was given to take it away

and my image now is not who I was.

It started with a virus or was it ME

And at BMH the ECG went wonky

They couldn't decide at QEMH

So the tabs and the jabs took the strain.

When the "Gulf" came along and I'd slept for an age

My hibernation I was told was over

These jabs and tabs will just do the trick

Now it's time to go and pack up your kit.

Whatever I took with such blind faith
I assumed it was given to help
But the cocktail of drugs that most of us took
Has left me unable to cope.

I get lost in a room that's blank and so bare
I get lost in myself in a crowd
I lose myself in a thousand yard stare
And get lost in memories so rare.

Although I get lost I still need to hide
And my bed is the best place I know
But sometimes oblivion is all that I need
And I find that in a bottomless glass.

I've heard it's a syndrome but what do I know
And my GP a conspiracy she calls it
Our gov't has told us it doesn't exist
So how dare I suggest that it does.

This whole body is mine and I know how I feel

So why do they tell me I'm wrong

I can't possibly have so much wrong with me

So why am I wasting their time.

I'm fobbed of with psychologists and psychiatrists et al

but my pain is below my brain

So it's back to my GP's what more could I do

But top up my notes with more claims.

To get recognition and try to define

That which I'm told is not there

They want me to believe that I'm not all there

So where am I will someone please help.

To cover all symptoms and bases we're told

That Syndrome as an umbrella term is used

So now our gov't has a cover to hide under

All the problems that we have become.

Now the DWP have entered the fray

Under the brolly they peek and they say

Your DLA we now cannot pay

'Cause your pains are not as you say.

I know that others are in the same boat

And travelling down the same road

This “syndrome” we have that doesn’t exist

What are we to do with ourselves.

So where do I stand what can I do now

Is this the end of my road

I don’t want to go on fighting this cause

‘Cause I’m tired of hitting brick walls.

SO

What do you think people what do you see

What are you thinking when you look at me

A miserable old man deemed not very wise

Uncertain of habit with faraway eyes.

Is that what you’re thinking is that what you see

Then open your eyes you’re not looking at me. (Battley, n.d.)

Afghanistan

Steve Carlsen

Take Your Pills

I'm home now and every thing is supposed to be okay

As hard as I try I still feel so out of place

trapped inside of a world deep within my mind

My thoughts keep rewinding backwards to a distant time

Instead of being a fuzzy picture projected on a screen

I see a high definition massive war machine

We all have demons deep down inside

Mine just come alive when I close my eyes

I yell and holler and cuss and scream

I can't wake up from my violent dreams

Smoke burns my eyes, I see the face of the dead

The war is still raging inside my head

Paranoia slowly sets in

Lock the door, check the door, check the door again

It's impossible to fall asleep without a loaded gun

A gun is not a guarantee that sleep will even come

Take a number. Wait your turn. Go to the end of the longest line.

"After a review of your paper work son, we believe that you are just fine."

"Take this pill, and every thing will be all right…

Don't let your kids piss you off and try not to hit your wife."

Their concerns are not for me. Its for every one else around

I try to tell them what is wrong but they never hear a sound

I am not the only one who has these thoughts and dreams

Our numbers are growing rapidly because of the war machine

With the sound of mortar rounds still ringing in my ears

The intensity of battle will stay with me for years

I'm expected to be, a functioning member of society

So I do what I can, to hide who I am, so I can be who they want me to be.

(Carlsen, n.d.)

Zachary Willey

Afghan Dust

Oh, this hot Afghani sun-

who would live here, anyone?

"Move your base there way on down

you're building on our future town"

through rotten teeth and peppered hair

says the shriveled Bandar Mayor.

I'm sure he wonders why we're here-

he wades in our wake a lake of fear.

He cannot see we'll do what's right

that peace is why we're here to fight.

Too proud to speak what's on his mind-

is it culture, or pride, that makes him blind?

I say, "hey wait, let's talk a while"

and flash my white, American smile

My boyish grin and short cropped hair

is a credible look most anywhere.

His laugh and hands say otherwise-

a different world under Afghan skies.

He walks away-slurs goodbye.

Is it dust, or tears, that sting my eyes?

I tell myself I don't care-

I've worries enough being fresh out of school

and told my degree

is a certification to set the world free.

So, I'm sorry about your little plot

of land, it's not a lot to give

in return for America's best try

led by me, your average guy. (Willey, 2014)

Anthony O'Dell

Afghan Orphan

He has a quota to meet.

carrying his box of wares,

eight years old, a businessman,

malnourished, stunted growth,

Eyes as dead as his soul.

Success–a drunken beating.

Failure–brutal abuse, rape.

Camouflaged customers patrol the street.

Chameleons change–performance time.

Stopping, staring down the barrel of a gun.

No reaction, No racing heart, No words,

he spoke this language for eight years.

Deadly resolve on the soldier's face,

Eyes as dead as his soul.

Shadows disapprove.

Cigar burn on his arm stings.

He turns to the next foreigner on the street.

He has a quota to meet. (O'Dell, 2017)

Iraq

Brian Turner

Here, Bullet

If a body is what you want,

then here is bone and gristle and flesh.

Here is the clavicle-snapped wish,

the aorta's opened valves, the leap

thought makes at the synaptic gap.

Here is the adrenaline rush you crave,
that inexorable flight, that insane puncture
into heat and blood. And I dare you to finish
what you've started. Because here, Bullet,
here is where I complete the word you bring
hissing through the air, here is where I moan
the barrel's cold esophagus, triggering
my tongue's explosives for the rifling I have
inside of me, each twist of the round
spun deeper, because here, Bullet,
here is where the world ends, every time. (Turner, 2005)

Danny Martin

Lessons

Do away with medals
Poppies and remembrance parades
Those boys were brave, we know
But look where it got them

Reduced to line after perfect line
Of white stones
Immobile, but glorious, exciting
To kids who haven't yet learned
That bullets don't make little red holes

They rip and smash and gouge

And drag the world's dirt behind them

Remember lads, you won't get laid

No matter how good your war stories

If you're dead

So melt down the medals

Fuel the fire with paper poppies, war books and Arnie films

Stop playing the pipes, stop banging the drums

And stop writing fucking poems about it. (Martin, 2008)

Daniel Uebbing

Imperial Commodity

Mary-Kate and Ashley–

these were the names embossed on the hulls

of two of America's Armored Infantry Fighting Bradleys,

At ease patrolling the streets with death and rock 'n' roll

Charlie 22, doted, "Ashley," moved into her post

in the city of Karbala, by the canal.

Two young freedom-fighting Iraqis–ghosts
thought to be dogs in the thermals at first–
then came into view white-hot with a most

Ever discernible knapsack (of RPGs) indicating a hostile thirst;
the gunner Martin (a Georgia Tech drop-out) snapped to it, forgetting to select co-ax
and unleashing a 25-millimeter high-explosive burst.

Ribald and unwitting we impale our cultural commodity hacks
Imperial young girls dishing out death in war-torn countries; smitten;
forgotten today, as we talk by the cafeteria, relax.

Imposing hunks of steel, full pivoting technological apex–
Special Forces with eyes on the destroyed human apparition–
Said it was a paint mess.

As for me, my actions serve no merit for contrition
Hostile intent? Yes, there always is, lest
I move the vehicle into position.

Lastly, men, we are on the cusp of securing our AO, yes?
Smoking a pack of reds on guard you read the famous imperial lines

from the box: “Veni, Vedi, Veci”–Human consciousness conquered,

as the mortars rain and the radio blares wholesale death in lively advertisements and jives–

we came, we saw, we squandered. (Uebbing, 2016)