Historicon® 2017 promises a wide array of presentations connected to military history, war games, and the history of war gaming. Keeping with this year’s theme, we are very focused on the 20th Century, and armored warfare, but if that is not your passion, there is a talk on the 18th Century Yamasee War, offered by Dixie Haggard, whose focus on Native American ways of warfare fascinated attendees two years ago. If your taste is more oriental, consider the presentation on Zhang Zongchang, the most notorious of 1920s Chinese warlords.

You could also participate in a court martial of George S Patton, learn how Polish pilots played a critical role in winning the Battle of Britain, or get a low-down on the Waffen SS by Douglas Nash, a well-published expert on Hitler’s elite fighting force. There’ll be a chance to debate where was the “greatest tank battle in history,” learn about urban combat in Hue during the Vietnam War, or see novel changes to the naval wargame rules, Fear God and Dread Nought.

If you only have time for one presentation, check out Saturday at Noon – “How the U.S. Army trained for war – the Dunn-Kempf system,” by Mike Dunn and Stephen Kempf. This might be the most innovative seminar ever offered by the War College. Dunn and Kempf are going to speak on how the U.S. Army converted wargame rules to help train active duty officers in the 1970s, then follow this up with a game based on that system. Here’s a chance to see how your hobby plays a role in training warfighters!

**The Myths of the Waffen SS**  
Thursday 1:00 PM, 1.5 Hrs  
Speaker: Douglas Nash  
Place World War II and “S.S.” in the same sentence, and many images spring to mind. Some of these are more mythological than historic. Douglas Nash, a senior historian with the United States Marine Corps History Division can help you separate wheat from chaff. He’s going to speak on “warfighting aspects of the organization, such as TO&Es, equipment, manpower, competence, morale, elite status etc.” His presentation is designed to benefit both the war gamer and historian.

Douglas E. Nash began his career in 1974 as an enlisted man, followed by his commissioning as an armor officer in 1980 after graduating from the US Military Academy at West Point. He is the author of Hell’s Gate: The Battle of the Cherkassy Pocket; Victory was Beyond their Grasp: with the 272nd VGD from the Huertgen Forest to the Heart of the Reich; Panzerjaeger in Westen," and "Kampfgruppe Muehlenkamp." He has appeared as a commentator on Oliver North’s War Stories on Fox TV and the History Channel. Since retiring from the US Army in 2006, he has been working as a civilian historian for the US Marine Corps.

**Battle of Hue City**  
Friday 9:00 AM, 1.5 Hrs  
Speaker: Paul Westermeyer.  
The Battle of Hue City (January – March 1968), during the Vietcong’s Tet Offensive, was a classic of urban warfare, with Marines and ARVN clawing their way block by block through the city. This lecture is paired with the game “Block by Block” running later on Friday.


**Native Religion and the Yamasee War (1715-1717)**  
Friday 11:00 AM, 1.5 Hrs  
Speaker: Dr. Dixie R. Haggard  
The Yamasee War was a significant event in the history of the Deep South for native people and colonists alike. Yet despite the importance of this event, little attention has been paid to the worldview of the indigenous participants and how this view shaped the events leading up to and the waging of the Yamasee War. This presentation describes the religious world of the indigenous inhabitants of the Deep South, demonstrates how religious imperatives formed the three native alliances most deeply involved in the war, and explains why English refusal to abide by religious diplomatic rituals and protocols led to the outbreak of hostilities.

**The Polish Air Force during the Second World War**  
Thursday 3:00 PM, 1.5 Hrs  
Speaker: Dr. Gregory Dryanski  
Greg Dryanski, a medical professional with a distinguished record caring for our veterans, has a passion for Polish military history. His previous talks ranged from an examination of Winged Hussars to a detailed account of Polish ground forces fighting with the western Allies during World War II.
Historicon® 2017
HMGS War College Seminar Series

Dixie R. Haggard is a professor of History at Valdosta State University. His primary research is focused on Native Americans of the South East, Indian ways of warfare, and the Trans-Atlantic World.

Poster Boy for wickedness, or Paragon of Warlords – Zhang Zongchang, the Dog Meat General, (1881-1932)
Friday 1:00 PM, 1.5 Hrs
Speaker: John Dunn
China dissolved into hundreds of military fiefdoms between 1916 and 1928. This was the era of the junfa (“warlords”). A colorful cast of former bandits, classical scholars, and revolutionaries; all were characters. The most notorious, Zhang Zongchang (Chang Tsung-ch’ang) was so infamous, over the top, and brazen, that noted China scholar Howard Boorman found it difficult to separate “man from myth.” Come hear about Zhang’s armored trains, his White Russian mercenaries, his command coffin and forty concubines. Embrace your inner warlord, and strive to become what Time Magazine called, “the basest man in China!”

Dr. John P. Dunn is interim chairman of the Department of History at Valdosta State University, mainly because the rest of his department was too smart to take that job. When not pushing paper, or abusing students, he studies 19th-20th Century military history of China, Poland, and Egypt.

Debate: The Greatest Tank Battle Ever?
Friday 6:00 PM, 1.5 Hrs
Speaker: Pete Panzeri
Join "KILLING BIN LADEN" author Pete Panzeri for a thought provoking presentation. Our historians will each make a case for "The Greatest Tank Battle in History" and then respond to audience questions. Then YOU (the audience) can vote on the most "convincing case."

Overhaul of Fear God & Dread Nought
Saturday 10:00 AM, 1.5 Hrs
Speaker: Chris Carlson
Description: The Admiralty Trilogy Group will address the changes put into the second edition Fear God & Dread Nought rules set. Introduced and moderated by Larry Bond, Chris Carlson will review the modifications to the rules themselves as well as discuss some of the modeling alterations to account for a better understanding of World War I era naval technology. A Q&A session will immediately follow the presentation.

How the U.S. Army trained for war – the Dunn-Kempf system
Saturday 12 Noon, 4.75 Hrs
Mike Dunn and Stephen Kempf
A not to be missed opportunity to learn about how the real world uses war games to train army officers, and to follow up with a chance to play a 1970s U.S. Army wargame! The Dunn-Kempf system, created by “two enterprising Command & General Staff College students from the class of 1975 repurposed Phil Barker’s WRG game as a class project. This caught the attention of senior folks at the Combined Arms Center here at FT Leavenworth. Within a couple years or so every maneuver battalion in the Army was issued a set of micro-armor, rules, and instructions for their local training support center (TASSC) to create vacuum formed terrain boards based upon local training areas.” The game is still employed to train U.S. Army simulation experts who go on to design war-fighting simulations for today.

The presentation includes input from one of the original designers, and is followed by a chance to participate in a Dunn-Kempf battle. This is a rare opportunity and should be top on your list if you play modern wargames, or want to see how our hobby has some very real world connections. The talk is about 50 minute, followed by a quick break, then a three-hour simulation. If you remember last year’s Kriegspiel demo by Mike Dunn, you know this is the real McCoy.

The Patton Court Martial – a Debate
Saturday 6 PM, 1.5 Hrs
Speaker: Pete Panzeri
In our military court martial, the Prosecutor will make a case for General Patton’s conviction. Then Patton’s Defense Team will make the case for his acquittal. Expect much lively drama done "in period character” and costume. Each side gives a closing statement and then YOU the Jury (audience) will vote on the outcome. Reviewed as "Highly entertaining, surprisingly educational and thought provoking."