

Dr. Michael Brenes, Yale University – [“How the Cold War Remade American Democracy”](#)

This talk will examine how the fight against global communism during the Cold War transformed the politics and political economy of the United States. Drawing on his book, *For Might and Right*, Michael Brenes shows how U.S. military spending and the creation of a permanent “military-industrial complex” created a powerful and enduring political coalition in the United States, one that sought to profit from or exploit Cold War foreign policy to serve its interests. This “Cold War coalition” mobilized around calls for increased defense spending throughout the Cold War, and united an array of actors across the United States, including defense workers, community boosters, military contractors, current and retired members of the armed services, activists, and politicians. When confronted with economic austerity and uncertainty surrounding America’s foreign policy after the 1960s, the Cold War coalition championed military spending as a bipartisan solution to create jobs and stimulate economic growth over the expansion of social welfare programs. The Cold War coalition ultimately paved the way for the American Right to take power during the 1980s, remaking American democracy in ways that now resonate in an era of “great-power competition” during the presidency of Joe Biden.

Dr. Jessica Kim, California State University, Northridge – [“Imperial Metropolis and American Empire”](#)

As hubs of trade and transportation, cities have long served as central nodes in not only global exchanges of people and products but also as key points in the development of imperial power.

Drawing from the history of Los Angeles, Jessica M. Kim explores urban and imperial expansionism in the context of U.S.-Mexico relations. She analyzes how Los Angeles investors transformed the borderlands through urban and imperial capitalism at the end of the nineteenth century and how the Mexican Revolution redefined those same capitalist networks into the twentieth. She’ll also discuss her current work, which explores the broader histories of the growth of American cities and the concurrent expansion of American global and imperial power.

Jessica Kim is a professor of history at California State University, Northridge. She is the author of *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865-1941* (University of North Carolina, 2019). The book was the 2020 co-winner of the Kenneth Jackson Award for Best Book from the Urban History Association and a finalist for the David J. Weber Prize from the Western History Association. She is currently working on a short history of American empire and American cities for the Global Urban History series at Cambridge University Press.

Dr. Elisabeth Leake, Tufts University – [“Afghan Crucible: The Soviet Invasion and the Remaking of the International Order”](#)

On 24 December 1979, Soviet armed forces entered Afghanistan, beginning an occupation that would last almost a decade and creating a political crisis that shook the world. To many observers, the Soviet invasion showed the lengths to which one of the world's superpowers would go to vie for supremacy in the global Cold War, with disastrous results still felt today. The Soviet war, and parallel covert American aid to Afghan resistance fighters, would come to be a defining event of international politics in the final years of the Cold War, lingering far beyond the Soviet Union's own demise. Yet, by tracing a global history of 1979 and its aftermath, I show that the Cold War competition was only a small part of the story. The war was a moment of crisis not just for Afghanistan or the Cold War but international relations and the postcolonial state.

Elisabeth Leake is the Lee E. Dirks Chair in Diplomatic History at the Fletcher School of Law and

Diplomacy, Tufts University. She is the author of *Afghan Crucible: The Soviet Invasion and the Making of Modern Afghanistan* (OUP, 2022), which won the 2023 Robert H. Ferrell Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Dr. Fabian Klose, University of Cologne – [“Enforcing Abolition and the Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention in the Nineteenth Century”](#)

The practice of humanitarian intervention – that is to say, of military intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state to stop the mass atrocities and the violation of humanitarian norms – is commonly situated within the international politics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Yet recent scholarship has identified the roots of humanitarian intervention in the nineteenth century. In this context, the practice of enforcing the abolition of the slave trade is pivotal, because it established the concept of humanitarian intervention as a recognized instrument in international politics. Closely intertwined with imperial and colonial projects, enforcing abolition however shaped also more general legal debates of when and how “civilized” states should intervene in a humanitarian crisis. Insofar these debates went far beyond the sole issue of intervening military against the slave trade, but significantly connected and shaped various fields of nineteenth century humanitarianism.

Fabian Klose is Chair-Professor of International History and Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Cologne. His research focuses on the history of decolonization, international humanitarian law, human rights, and humanitarianism in the 19th and 20th centuries. On the history of human rights and humanitarianism he has published *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence. The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* (Philadelphia 2013), *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention. Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* (Cambridge 2016) and recently *In the Cause of Humanity. A History of Humanitarian Intervention in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge 2022). He is Co-founder of the Cologne Bonn Academy in Exile (CBA) and Managing Director of the newly founded Cologne Centre for Advanced Studies in International History and Law (CHL).

Dr. Greg Daddis, San Diego State University – [“Pulp Vietnam: Pop Culture and the American War in Vietnam”](#)

In a compelling evaluation of Cold War popular culture, Professor Gregory A. Daddis, the USS Midway Chair in Modern US Military History at San Diego State University, explores how pop culture from the 1950s and early 1960s helped shape the attitudes of young, working-class Americans, the same men who fought and served in the long and bitter war in Vietnam.

By examining Cold War “macho pulps”—men’s magazines boasting titles like *Man’s Conquest*, *Battle Cry*, and *Adventure Life*—Daddis reveals how war stories in popular culture tell us something important about American society’s desire to remember war in certain ways and how these stories helped establish GIs’ expectations and perceptions of the war in Vietnam.

Gregory A. Daddis is a professor of history at San Diego State University and holds the USS Midway Chair in Modern US Military History. Daddis joined SDSU after directing the MA Program in War and Society Studies at Chapman University. Prior, he served as the Chief of the American History Division in the Department of History at the United States Military Academy at West Point. A retired US Army colonel, he deployed to both Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. Daddis specializes in the history of the Vietnam Wars and the Cold War era and has authored five books, including *Pulp Vietnam: War and Gender in Cold War Men's Adventure Magazines* (2020) and *Withdrawal: Reassessing*

America's Final Years in Vietnam (2017). He has also published numerous journal articles and several op-ed pieces commenting on current military affairs, to include writings in the New York Times, the Washington Post, and National Interest magazine. He is the recipient of the 2022-2023 Fulbright Distinguished Scholar Award, Pembroke College, University of Oxford.

Dr. Stephanie Freeman, Department of State, Office of the Historian – “Dreams for a Decade: Nuclear Abolitionism and the End of the Cold War”

The 1980s was a unique decade during which the radical goal of nuclear abolition enjoyed support from both grassroots movements across the globe and the leaders of the two superpowers, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. In *Dreams for a Decade*, Stephanie L. Freeman draws on newly declassified material to reveal the significant yet unappreciated role that nuclear abolitionism played in ending the Cold War. Together, grassroots and government nuclear abolitionists reshaped U.S. and Soviet approaches to nuclear arms control and Europe in a way that brought the Cold War to a peaceful conclusion.

Stephanie L. Freeman is a Historian in the Office of the Historian at the U.S. Department of State. She earned a Ph.D. in history from the University of Virginia and previously spent four years as Assistant Professor of History at Mississippi State University. She is the author of *Dreams for a Decade: International Nuclear Abolitionism and the End of the Cold War* (2023). Her work has also appeared in *Diplomacy & Statecraft* and *The Reagan Moment: America and the World in the 1980s* (2021).

[Due to technical difficulties, Dr. Freeman's lecture is unavailable]