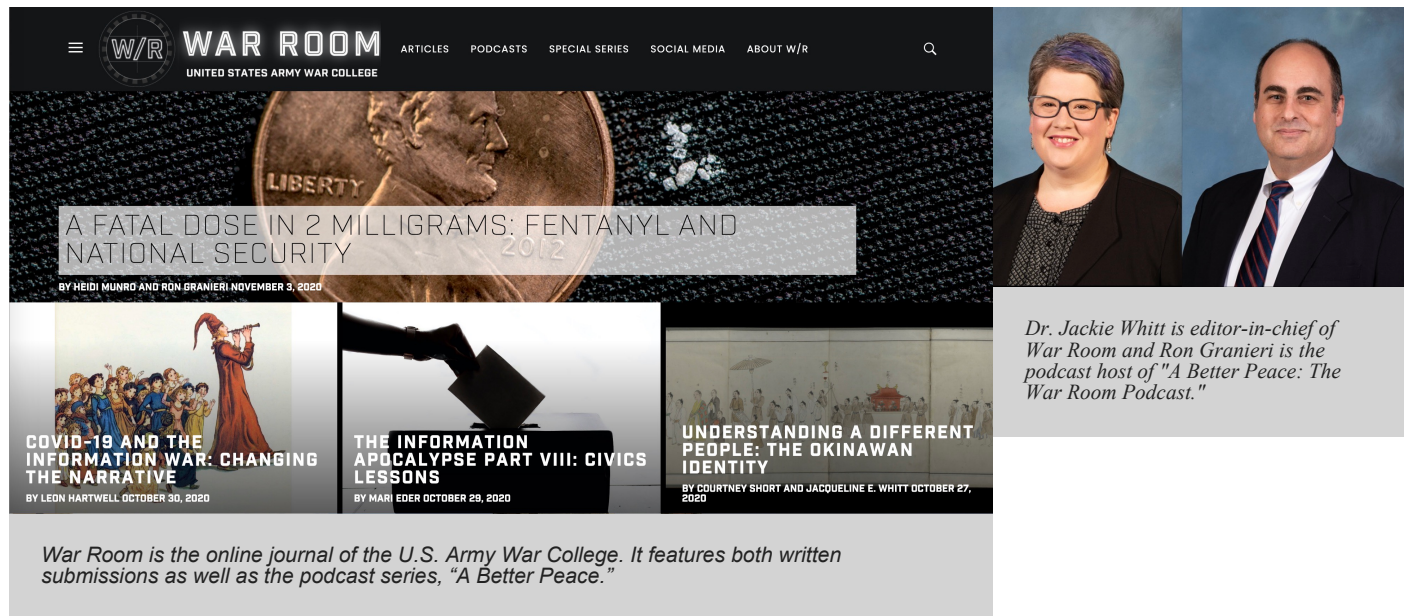


The War Room: Its Not Boring

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 03 November 2020



WAR ROOM
UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE

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Dr. Jackie Whitt is editor-in-chief of War Room and Ron Granieri is the podcast host of "A Better Peace: The War Room Podcast."

War Room is the online journal of the U.S. Army War College. It features both written submissions as well as the podcast series, "A Better Peace."

It is not boring. *War Room* is the online journal of the U.S. Army War College. It features both written submissions as well as the podcast series, "A Better Peace." Its purpose is to engage an audience that is educated, yet unfamiliar with certain topics of war, strategy and leadership.

"It is not boring' . . . is a pretty good tagline for what we are trying to do," said Jackie Whitt, editor-in-chief of W/R, started in 2017 by former faculty member Dr. Andrew Hill.

"One of the initial intents of W/R, as a whole, was to encourage students at the war college to publish more often," said Mark "Buck" Haberichter, W/R managing editor and former USAWC faculty member. Faculty are encouraged to offer their expertise, he said.

For students, participating in the W/R offers a multitude of benefits. "Listen to W/R because the content will be helpful to you in your studies," said, Ron Granieri, the podcast host. "If you want to get your ideas to a broader audience, a podcast conversation functions as a good medium."

Writing an article for the W/R develops and refines communication skills.

“We are waiting to hear from them . . . and happy to work with people,” said Haberichter, about war college students. “The edit staff can help . . . develop the product for publication.”

“Having to write clearly and concisely is crucial to civil-military work,” said Whitt. “All of this—military knowledge and expertise and ideas—needs to be accessible to the public, to policy makers, to decision makers.

About 6,000 people subscribe to W/R.

Among the many online publications and podcasts that discuss military issues (including one that uses the name “War Room” and focuses on politics and culture, rather than military-related issues), the W/R remains unique. The type of content the W/R circulates is not tied to current events or news cycle. “We try and make sure that whatever we’re talking about is evergreen,” said Haberichter. “What are the life-long-lessons associated with a particular topic?”

W/R gives people a look into what goes on at the war college, noted Granieri.

Articles on inclusion and diversity are gaining traction, noted Whitt. Dr. Allison Abby’s article “The Balancing Act for Female Officers” about the tightrope women walk between being feminine and belonging to a group in the military is still the most popular article, with about 20,000 views. “Not Worth a Thousand Words: Abandoning the DA Photo” by Army Maj. Paul Kearney has gained a lot of visibility, among articles that highlight high-level leadership and the human aspect of the military.

Podcasts addressing U.S. international relations maintain a good following. Granieri talks about several podcasts he is particularly excited about. “‘International Carlisle Scholar’ provides a glimpse into the kinds of students that attend the Army War College and ‘Towards a Better Understanding of Other Peoples’ was a real chance to offer perspectives on an organization that people have heard of but don’t know a lot about it,” said Granieri, about the Peace Corps.

Other than Haberichter, the W/R staff consists entirely of volunteers. “I am proud of the team that sets aside time on a weekly basis from their work, their families and takes this on as well,” Haberichter said.

“I am always looking for something that is new and challenging to me.... That’s the thing that has kept me involved,” said Whitt. “It fills needs -- the desires all of us have to contribute in meaningful ways.”

“I enjoy the conversations. I enjoy meeting new people and learning about new things,” said Granieri. “I really feel like what we do is important. Being a thought leader can be a variation of teaching, which is an aspect of thought leadership.

“It is the work of introducing people to new topics. I see what we do as part of what is a very serious, intellectual responsibility.”

Each podcast episode is specifically designed to be 30 minutes because that is the average length of a work commute or gym workout—the times when people typically listen to an episode. During COVID, the podcast listenership has remained relatively steady, although work from home has decreased work commutes and people are not flooding gyms.

Since COVID, the team relies fully on remote recording. The commitment to remote recording was a catalyst to cast a wider net, inviting national and international speakers to join the show. The fully online submission process allows for the same breadth of participation for written articles, as well.

Tune in to see who is featured next on “A Better Peace.” Better yet, explore your ideas through writing and podcasting. The W/R is eager for students to share their ideas, reiterated Haberichter.