

# Veteran Descendants

## Benjamin Cooper

### I.

**A**merica's veterans of the Vietnam era increasingly are approaching the end of their natural lifespans. As notable author and Vietnam veteran Tim O'Brien put it on the first page of his recent *Dad's Maybe Book* (2019), "the actuarial stuff looks grim."<sup>1</sup> O'Brien frames that book—published some seventeen years after his last—as a love letter to his two sons, Tad and Timmy. Their legacy and the growing recognition of his own approaching mortality compelled him back to prose after such a long hiatus. Write everything down, one last time, so that my kids might know me before I die. The book is a private family affair made public (an apt way to describe American veteran literature more broadly) whose form is a collage of reminiscences addressed to his sons and which O'Brien jotted down over many years. The chronology and audience become fluid, yet O'Brien's curatorial impulse to integrate textually his own experience into his sons' futures is clear: "I've rewritten what I can remember. And now you are on my lap again, my spectacular Timmy. I'm using your fingers to type these words."<sup>2</sup> It's a fine book and heartfelt, to be sure, and yet I mean to suggest there's something more to the work than farewell. O'Brien both produces and reflects the irresistible veteran need to write their descendants into being as a way to absorb them rhetorically into veteran identity itself. Like other veteran descendants before them, Tad and Timmy sit as mute props at the service of their veteran author. My purpose here is to explore the nature of descendant silencing and to stress the possibilities for how and why veteran descendants could write back.

One might ask whether what I'm noticing at the outset is unique to veteran literature per se. Certainly the instinct to caretake and preserve one's experience for the next generation is

common to life writing more generally. Benjamin Franklin addresses his *Autobiography* (1771-90) to his son, after all, and Franklin would not claim to be a veteran (I don't think). Yet for all the Franklins out there writing to their sons, there are also examples one can find of civilian life writing that does not feel the pull of children or family. Frederick Douglass, for one, never mentioned his four living children in his *Narrative* (1845) and only acknowledges his wife in the final pages. Without generalizing too much, I want to underscore that within the subset of America's veteran writers specifically, the genealogical impulse to imagine and address their descendants is acute and aching. Douglass could sidestep his descendants, but could O'Brien? Could *any* veteran ever write about their experience without writing about (if not truly writing to) their descendants in the process?

I suggest no, they cannot, although some might say that someone like O'Brien is just following the pattern of previous generational churn. Whenever a war generation reaches its end, literary production proliferates around issues of testimony and witnessing. We see it in the waning decades of the nineteenth century in magazines such as the *Galaxy* and *Century* as Civil War veterans aged, and we see it in the late 1980s and early 1990s when observers in the United States and Europe became anxious over the mass passing of World War II veterans and Holocaust survivors. It's no accident that scholars such as Shoshanna Felman and Cathy Caruth respectively publish *Testimony* (1992) and *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) around the same time Steven Spielberg directs *Schindler's List* (1993) and Art Spiegelman draws *Maus* (1991).

All true, but let me tell you another O'Brien story from several decades ago. When I was nineteen years old and in college, I first read *The Things They Carried* (1994), the work that is O'Brien's best known and written when he was forty-three and the actuarial tables looked much better. The book announces itself to be a work of fiction right there on the title page, but as

many readers may remember, the narrator has the same name as the author: Tim O'Brien. Like the author, the narrator is also forty-three years old and also raised in the same small Minnesota town. The lines between what the book calls "story truth" and "happening truth" become intentionally blurred, and even though I had never been in the military (and never would), I connected deeply with the book's depictions of young Americans at war in Vietnam.

I connected most with the poignant conversations O'Brien had between himself and his daughter, Kathleen, who asked the kinds of direct questions only kids can ask. "'Daddy, tell the truth,' Kathleen can say, 'did you ever kill anybody?' And I [O'Brien] can say, honestly, 'Of course not.' Or I can say, honestly, 'Yes.'"<sup>3</sup> Hits you right in the feels, doesn't it? Especially if you're nineteen like me, naïve, and prone to romanticizing matters of life and death. A few years after my first read, I brought O'Brien to my college campus. During the reception after his talk, I asked him how his daughter was doing. "Who?" he asked. "Kathleen. Your daughter?" You, dear reader, already suspect what is coming. "Oh, I don't have a daughter. I made her up."

I had never felt so suckered, and while my shock has ebbed over time, the significance of that revelation has remained with me for more than twenty years. Why? Because of all the invented situations and characters in the novel, Kathleen was the epistemological core in my response as a reader. Her questions to her veteran father about his military experiences were what William James in "The Will to Believe" (1896) would have called "live ones," or demands that cannot be denied, repressed, or otherwise avoided.

A living option is one in which both hypotheses are live ones. If I say to you: "Be a theosophist or be a Mohammedan," it is probably a dead option, because for you neither hypothesis is likely to be alive. But if I say: "Be an agnostic or be a

Christian," it is otherwise: trained as you are, each hypothesis makes some appeal, however small, to your belief.

Next, if I say to you: "Choose between going out with your umbrella or without it," I do not offer you a genuine option, for it is not forced. You can easily avoid it by not going out at all. Similarly, if I say, "Either love me or hate me," "Either call my theory true or call it false," your option is avoidable. You may remain indifferent to me, neither loving nor hating, and you may decline to offer any judgment as to my theory. *But if I say, "Either accept this truth or go without it," I put on you a forced option, for there is no standing place outside of the alternative.* Every dilemma based on a complete logical disjunction, with no possibility of not choosing, is an option of this forced kind. [emphasis added]<sup>4</sup>

Kathleen puts upon her veteran father "forced options" surrounding questions of veteran experience, combat, guilt, and responsibility that cannot be escaped or deferred—both within the fictional world of the novel but also for the reader eavesdropping on the tender scene. Put another way, Kathleen captivates her veteran auditor as she does her ideal reader insofar as her voice is a substitution for her veteran's ultimate concerns. Learning that O'Brien was a childless veteran and that Kathleen was not genetically real in some sense lessened the intensity of her force for me—an insight that speaks both to audience expectations (why care so much about the kid?) as well as authorial craft (why plant the kid?) within the world of veteran literature more broadly.

Whether real or imagined, the veteran descendant is an irresistible rhetorical instrument in part because the descendant operates as a moral equivalence of war (another Jamesian

idea)—something to fight for and talk to without really having to fight or talk directly. Vietnam veteran Karl Marlantes in *What It Is Like to Go To War* (2011) imagines the audience of his memoir to be young people, that they might read it as a kind of combat prophylactic. Throughout that memoir, his sense of his own shortcomings in war is intimately tied to his sense of failure as a father to five kids.

Evil is very ordinary. We don't have to look far to see its causes. It's the little things, such as ... letting kids eat junk food that abuses their health because the parents' working or social life is more important than preparing a decent meal at home. It is not expressing horror at television violence. *Cruelty in warfare is as mundane and common as cruelty in child rearing.* [emphasis added]<sup>5</sup>

Is he talking hypothetically here, or are his own children hearing a confession of regret (deserved or not)? Either way, the impact of falling short is the same rhetorically. Veterans often tie perceived moral failures in war to perceived moral failures in childrearing, such as in Vietnam veteran W.D. Erhart's poetry, which is often preoccupied about his needs to connect with his real-life daughter.<sup>6</sup> That desire to connect is never fully met for Erhart's poetic speakers, nor is it for Iraq War veteran and poet Brian Turner in "To My Unnamed Daughter"—a hypothetical descendant who, like O'Brien's Kathleen, exists not to speak for herself but rather to be the object of veteran apostrophe.<sup>7</sup> In the process, the veteran descendant serves as a symbolic displacement of the veteran desire for change—hope that "what comes next" for a new generation will be different (whatever that means).

Along those lines of hope, often veteran descendants become projections of innocence and higher purpose. "You're what this war is all about," John Wayne tells a young Vietnamese boy in the final shots of *The Green Berets* (1968), which is a political if not outright misleading representation of the motives for American military involvement in Vietnam.<sup>8</sup> As Patrick Hagopian notes in *The Vietnam War in American Memory* (2009), local memorials in the United States after the war often wanted like Wayne to represent American GIs as protectors of Vietnamese children rather than their killers.<sup>9</sup> "And babies?" Paul Meadlo was asked by Mike Wallace in a CBS interview about who he targeted during the massacre at My Lai in 1968. "And babies," he replied.<sup>10</sup> It is hard to square the symbolic rescue of Vietnamese children in *The Green Berets* with Meadlo's confession of infanticide, and yet those meanings necessarily compete in the arena of collective memory of the war. Such tension also complicates the problem of veteran descendants even further because while all the examples of veteran descendants up until this point have been inherently family affairs, the boundaries are not restricted only to veterans' biological children. Sometimes an anonymous Vietnamese child can stand in.

But stand in for what, exactly? Hope, innocence and duty, to be sure, but also time, and specifically how veteran descendants can collapse past, present, and future. Most of Iraq War veteran Kayla William's *Plenty of Time When We Get Home: Love and Recovery in the Aftermath of War* (2014) focuses on her strained relationship with her spouse, who is recovering from TBI and experiencing PTS. Only after their marriage calms do they consider having children in the final chapter, and those children become present for only two pages in the Epilogue. Just seeing them convinces Kayla that she doesn't want to ever die, because then "I'll never get to see them again.... It felt simultaneously profound and ridiculous. Of course I didn't want to die. But it

wasn't until one marriage, two children, and eight years after getting back from Iraq that I was able to truly open myself up to that knowledge." Children mark time, but they also forecast doom for the future. "Looking at my own children now, I try to imagine them grown—and maimed" as a result of war.<sup>11</sup> In William's evaluation, her children have no future disentangled from her own military past. Instead, they operate as fatalistic expressions of her own "maimed" history described at length throughout the memoir.

Indeed, many veteran texts imagine the worst in how the past predicts their descendants' futures. Wallace Terry introduces *Bloods: Black Veterans of the Vietnam War: An Oral History* (1984) by fixating on his own family. "When my youngest child, David, was still a baby, I learned about the death of the youngest American soldier who would die in combat in Vietnam.... The soldier was a sixteen-year-old black Marine from a poor and broken family in Brooklyn. He had lied about his age to join the Marines and thereby earn money to help support his mother." The occasion allows Terry to imagine Vietnam being "10,000 miles from the heartbreak of American poverty and discrimination and injustice.... And now, as I write these words, that youngest child of mine is himself sixteen."<sup>12</sup> The connection seems significant, but is it? For Terry, yes, because his son "could have been" the young dead Marine. Objectively, of course, there is no clear bond between the dead sixteen-year-old and the author's own child, who—like Kayla Williams' children in the previous paragraph—has no clear relationship with or experience of war.

Such morbid imaginary bonds get formed, however, because veteran authors lash the futures of their descendants onto their own uncertain pasts. To wit, West Point graduate and Iraq War veteran Alex Vernon closes his memoir *Most Succinctly Bred* (2006) with the birth of his first child. CNN flickers on the television in his wife's hospital room after the delivery. "Like movie credits, the white roll [of KIA] scrolls up the black screen" while he sits with his newborn in

his arms, forced to “look back and forth through tears between the roll call and my daughter as the fog of memory moves in.” This interplay of child and war activates self-reflection. “I see no beauty in war, only ugliness, if sometimes a necessary ugliness. The glory of war is rhetoric; the miracle of birth is understatement.”<sup>13</sup> Like so many other veteran authors, Vernon seemingly cannot comment on military experience without commenting on his offspring in the same breath. The recurring desire in all these examples is for comfort, yes, but these texts are also driven by anxiety. Vernon wonders if his veteran experience has already doomed his newborn daughter at birth: “Then there’s the additional worry of the improbable but possible. Gulf War Syndrome sometimes strikes the children of veterans rather than the veterans themselves.”<sup>14</sup>

My argument does not assume medical or psychiatric expertise and does not claim clinical insight into GWS or PTS. Yet as a literary construction, veteran descendants like Vernon’s function epigenetically. The mechanism is similar to Marianne Hirsch’s theory in *Maus* of “postmemory,” or how traumatic experience is passed down within a family to subsequent generations, who then come to inhabit vicariously that experience.<sup>15</sup> In a similar vein, I am reminded of the final chapter of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, in which the painful history of slavery is an ambivalent desire—a hurt that should both be stopped but also that which it is our obligation to keep going. Morrison insists that “it was not a story to pass on,” which is to say that the brutal nest of filicide and bestiality and all the rest of the “unspeakable things, unspoken” in the novel are sequestered and sealed once the book is shut and put away. Yet the past (the “was” in the sentence) evolves in its final iteration into the immediacy of the present: “*This is* not a story to pass on” [emphasis added].<sup>16</sup> The very language to “pass on” makes us think about how experience *can* be passed on (or not) from hosts to their descendants. It also



suggests not just transmission but actually duty, that we, as readers, *must not* “pass” or skip over this story that is being entrusted to us to preserve.

## II.

Given all the rhetorical pressure that veteran authors place upon their descendants, do those descendants in fact have an obligation to the stories and experiences they inherit? The question is related to how succeeding generations feel pulled to war memory and memorial more generally. Given that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is the “most-visited memorial on the National Mall in Washington, attracting more than 5 million people each year,” it is clear that Americans every day make the choice not “to pass” on communing with the Wall and its more than 58,000 names.<sup>17</sup> Yet as Viet Thanh Nguyen notes in *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (2016), that list is unfinished.

Present in the black wall are redeemed American soldiers. Absent from the memorial are the casualties who are easier to forget, the veterans who suffer from trauma, or are homeless, or have committed suicide, as the memorial’s most astute critic, Marita Sturken, observes. Collectively, these postwar dead and wounded far outnumber the wartime deaths, but this nation, like other nations, has difficulty acknowledging them and their ills.<sup>18</sup>

The final cost of the Vietnam War to human life exceeds the names etched into stone, hence why the “In Memory” Plaque was added in 2004: “In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service, we honor and remember their sacrifice.”<sup>19</sup> Situated in the plaza of the Three Serviceman (itself another memorial update in

1984), that plaque acknowledges those military service members who died years later as a result of Agent Orange, cancer, PTSD, and other comorbidities. To its credit, "In Memory" continues the memorial's tendency toward inclusiveness over time—seen also in the addition of the Vietnam Women's Memorial in 1993.

Given all that, I would point out that neither the Wall nor its amendments gesture toward the descendants of the veterans who are memorialized, which is a notable absence given how present those descendants are within veteran literary consciousness. Nguyen would also observe that even as inclusive as the memorials are, they still lack a space to remember the humanity of the Vietnamese and the enormity of other invisible and erased casualties of the war that extend into Laos, Cambodia, and other geographies and cultures.<sup>20</sup> For Nguyen, the rigid boundaries of American war memory conspire to cause a "forgetting [that] is not accidental but deliberate, strategic, even malicious—in other words, disremembering."<sup>21</sup> The idea of disremembering is Morrison's, as is its antidote—rememory—which is "a memory that inflicts physical and psychic blows; it is a sense that the past has not vanished but is solid as a house, present in all its trauma and malevolence."<sup>22</sup> Excluded from American collective memory of the war, the repressed violence against Vietnamese people finds its rememored form in the postwar displacement and migration of many Vietnamese to the United States (if not also the literature and scholarship Nguyen himself writes). "What these refugees and their descendants who wish to become American seek is recognition, which is intimately tied to memory. We remember those we recognize, and we recognize those we remember. Some of us, perhaps most of us, yearn to be remembered and recognized, by our intimates and our colleagues, by society and history."<sup>23</sup> Memory responds to advocacy and vocalization, yet even then any gains are always threatened. What I want to propose is a challenge for veteran descendants that they similarly could resist

the active process of their own disremembering in the form of public memorial, surely, but also from the interests of veteran authors who up until now have spoken for them.

Since the long American veteran literary tradition has not allowed for their descendants' autonomy, the pressing question remains: do veteran descendants in fact have an obligation to the stories and experiences they inherit? Historically, veteran descendants have internalized such an expectation and written not to complicate veteran experience but to caretake and whitewash it. When tasked with that responsibility to take up the narrative baton, they have largely tended since at least the Civil War to be conservative and subservient in their representation of their veteran progenitors. Sara (Agnes Rice) Pryor, wife of Confederate General Roger Pryor, makes clear in her *Reminiscences of Peace and War* (1904) that her project is to preserve the nostalgic golden days of "Washington in the Fifties," for example.<sup>24</sup> Virginia Clay-Clopton's *A Belle in the Fifties* (1904) and Louise Wigfall Wright's *A Southern Girl in '61: The War-Time Memories of a Confederate Senator's Daughter* (1905) likewise work to praise their fathers, not bury them. This is not surprising, nor is it surprising to see the same parental worship in Union memoirs, either. Jesse Root Grant's *In the Days of My Father* declares its purpose "that the world may know the man I knew [Ulysses S. Grant]."<sup>25</sup> The hagiography overflows with pride for his dad, but "not pride alone in his bravery—countless other men possessed courage—but pride in the rarer qualities through which he rose to eminence," including (according to Jesse) humility and sobriety: "Until the beginning of the [Civil] war, when he was thirty-eight years of age, father had never used tobacco, and he was never at any time a drinking man."<sup>26</sup> The image of a "sober Grant" isn't just rose-colored glasses but rather revisionist history.

In the veteran's shadow, the descendant carries a heavy eulogizing burden. Veteran literary identity has benefited as a result insofar as it has been maintained through their

descendants collaborating in the family business. Conversely, descendants have benefited from the suggestion that veteran virtue persists in them (if not also through subsequent generations). At least in the views of his biographers, Ambrose Bierce's penchant for rough living and adventure has a second life in his children. Day Bierce, his first son, died in a duel over a woman.<sup>27</sup> "Like father, like son—Day Bierce went around with a gun on his hip that was as quick as his temper."<sup>28</sup> Day was also a California newspaper reporter, and "it seems that young Day had inherited his father's confidence, artistic temperament, sensitivity and journalistic leanings...." Also not too far from the tree was Ambrose's other son Leigh who was a writer in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York; he was also known like his father for prolonged drinking binges and died young of pneumonia.<sup>29</sup> Adolphe Danzinger, a contemporary, called Leigh "the very image of what his father must have been at the same age."<sup>30</sup> In the nineteenth century just as in the twentieth century, the succession of veteran image appears seamless, normative, and natural.

Such labor to maintain appearances is not without its costs, specifically to veteran descendant voice in its own right. I would wager that few readers today are familiar with the writings of any of the Bierce children, nor are they versed in someone like Jack Hemingway, son of Ernest, who joined the U.S. Army during World War II and has his own story to tell (mainly about the outdoors), yet who is constantly defined by his father. The very title to his memoir, *Misadventures of a Fly Fisherman*, locates fishing, nature, and conservation as a metaphor for his life story, yet the subtitle is *My Life With and Without Papa*. As he notes, "I spent the first fifty years of my life being the son of a famous father."<sup>31</sup> I'm not suggesting Jack deserves a renaissance among readers so much as I'm trying to locate the pressure points I see at work in

keeping veteran descendants from their own self-actualization, including veteran self-interest, biographer short-sightedness, and their own lack of confidence.

All that may be true, yet my ultimate purpose is not to berate or blame veteran authors. I wrote an entire book trying to foreground their own erasure in nineteenth-century American literary history.<sup>32</sup> As I look back on my conclusions in that book, however, they appear to me now somewhat rigid because they assumed the boundary of veteran identity stops with veteran experience itself. The operating conceit laid out in the book was us versus them—a territorial club of veteran writers that was highly inclusive within itself but necessarily exclusive of uninitiated civilians. Now I think that veteran descendants disrupt those barriers. The fact that veteran authors are so often drawn to speak to them suggests as much.

The literary relationship between veteran and descendant has been one-way rather than reciprocal, and veteran descendants have abdicated an opportunity to define not only themselves but in part their forebearers. What would it mean for Tad and Timmy to write back to their famous father? Alternatively, what if Jack Hemingway never acknowledged his famous father at all? The options for veteran descendants up until this point have been silence or worship, but there is a space for earnest intersectionality where veteran voices interact with the voices of their descendants. Indeed, the history I have outlined here wherein veteran authors relentlessly address their descendants but hear nothing back suggests an unmet and vital veteran need. We should take that yearning seriously, just as we should take seriously the claim veteran descendants have to their own rememory and recognition.

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Tim O'Brien, *Dad's Maybe Book* (Boston: Mariner, 2019), 1.
- <sup>2</sup> O'Brien, *Dad's Maybe Book*, 4.
- <sup>3</sup> Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried* (New York: Broadway Books, 1990), 180.
- <sup>4</sup> William James, "The Will to Believe," *New World* (June 1896), in *Essays in Pragmatism by William James*, ed. Alburey Castell (New York: Hafner, 1948), 89.
- <sup>5</sup> Karl Marlantes, *What It Is Like to Go to War* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 2011), 101.
- <sup>6</sup> See William Daniel Ehrhart, *Matters of the Heart*, in *The Adastra Reader: Being the Collected Chapbooks in Facsimile with Bibliography, Author Notes & Comments on Hand Book Making*, ed. Gary Metras, (Easthampton, MA: Adastra Press, 1987). For example, the poems "Briana" and "Small Song for Daddy" focus on the veteran speaker's need to connect rather than the child's. Similarly, "Simple Lives of Cats" reflects on how the speaker traumatized his wife and child and "Some Other World" addresses an infant daughter in a moment of repose that the speaker wants to hold onto forever.
- <sup>7</sup> Brian Turner, "To My Unnamed Daughter," in *Phantom Noise* (New Gloucester, Maine: Alice James Books, 2010), 76-77.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Green Berets*, directed by John Wayne and Ray Kellogg (Warner Brothers, 1968), DVD.
- <sup>9</sup> Patrick Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory* (Amherst: Massachusetts University Press, 2009), 309-347.
- <sup>10</sup> "Transcript of Interview of Vietnam War Veteran on His Role in Alleged Massacre of Civilians at Songmy," *New York Times*, Nov. 25, 1969, 16.
- <sup>11</sup> Kayla Williams, *Plenty of Time When We Get Home* (New York: Norton, 2014), 233.
- <sup>12</sup> Wallace Terry, *Bloods: Black Veterans of the Vietnam War: An Oral History* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1984), xvi.
- <sup>13</sup> Alex Vernon, *Most Succinctly Bred* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006), 97.
- <sup>14</sup> Vernon, *Most Succinctly Bred*, 92.
- <sup>15</sup> See Marianne Hirsch, "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Post-Memory," *Discourse* 15.2 (Winter 1992-93): 3-29; Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29.1 (Spring 2008): 103-28.
- <sup>16</sup> Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Vintage, 2004), 323-24.
- <sup>17</sup> "Vietnam Veterans Memorial," accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Experience/Vietnam-Veterans-Memorial/>.
- <sup>18</sup> Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 49.
- <sup>19</sup> Vietnam Veterans Memorial: In Memory Plaque, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.nps.gov/places/000/vietnam-veterans-memorial-in-memory-plaque.htm>.
- <sup>20</sup> Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*, 25.
- <sup>21</sup> Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*, 40.
- <sup>22</sup> Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*, 65.
- <sup>23</sup> Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*, 71.
- <sup>24</sup> Sara Agnes Rice Pryor, *Reminiscences of Peace and War* (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 3-14.
- <sup>25</sup> Jesse Root Grant, *In the Days of My Father General Grant*, (New York: Harpers, 1925), ix. Jesse posthumously collaborates in the memory of his father, just as years earlier, Buck Grant (another son), had co-written and compiled U.S. Grant's more famous memoir while he was on his death bed.
- <sup>26</sup> Grant, *In the Days of My Father General Grant*, 3, 31.
- <sup>27</sup> Carey McWilliams, *Ambrose Bierce: A Biography* (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1929), 192.
- <sup>28</sup> Richard Saunders, *Ambrose Bierce: The Making of a Misanthrope* (San Francisco: Chronicle, 1985), 55.
- <sup>29</sup> Saunders, *Ambrose Bierce*, 54, 269.
- <sup>30</sup> Richard O'Connor, *Ambrose Bierce: A Biography* (Boston: Little, 1967), 199.
- <sup>31</sup> Jack Hemingway, *Misadventures of a Fly Fisherman: My Life With and Without Papa* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1986). The quotation appears on the back of the book jacket.
- <sup>32</sup> Benjamin Cooper, *Veteran Americans: Literature and Citizenship from Revolution to Reconstruction*. Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 2018.