

*Between capture and the camp: Apprehending prisoners in America's wars 1949–2011*

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Abstract: This dissertation is a genealogy of the geographical and technological practices that shaped the space between battlefield capture and the prisoner of war camp in America's wars between 1949 and 2011. I piece together a historical depiction of a space that has confounded US military planners, frightened and endangered captives, and remained largely invisible in the military historical record. It is my argument that consideration of these spaces can reveal important but overlooked elements of the geography of warfare and violence, the nature and governance of bodily power, and the dynamic role of enclosure in security performances. I build my argument using a qualitative research approach that includes critical textual and visual discourse analyses of archival materials drawn from a range of sources, from formerly classified administrative logs to recently leaked security files. Over the course of the past sixty years, these liminal spaces, balanced precariously between the lethality of war and the humanitarian objectives of care and custody, have transformed from largely unregulated sites of encounter to technologically mediated, highly choreographed, and geographically distributed interfaces. I begin by considering the spatiality of the point of capture and subsequently trace an unfolding and expanding set of technologies and bodily practices that have reconfigured the limits of American wartime detention. This interface between inside and outside is no longer necessarily a violent encounter between war fighters, but is increasingly mediated by expansive digital technologies that aim to control a global population of potential threats. I highlight the historical development of the shifting terrain on which these thresholds came to be known, knowable, and governed. This project represents the first sustained engagement with the history of American military detention practices in the field of geography and the first academic study of the precarious space between capture and the camp.