

Title:

Family Matters: Trauma and the Legacy of War in J.A. Moad II's

Outside Paducah: The Wars at Home

Abstract:

Outside Paducah: The Wars at Home (2016), a play written and performed solo by James Allen Moad II, a former Air Force pilot, explores the enduring consequences of war in veterans and their families after soldiers return home from the battleground. The play moves beyond the individual representation of a traumatised veteran by addressing two main intertwined issues: collective and transgenerational war burden, both in the form of physical wounds and/or moral injuries. *Outside Paducah* contributes to promoting the stage as a dynamic place to think about the war legacy and to question and challenge war itself by stressing the importance of understanding the cost of war on both personal and societal levels. The play shows that the scenes of war fought in foreign lands are brought back to the home territories and families who become equally demoralised in the perpetuation of war in their homelands. The fighters return as ghosts of their previous selves and haunt their families and friends from one generation to another. Therefore, war remains an open wound at the core of the American nation. The play also intends to shed some light on the harsh realities of the underprivileged classes, and how joining the military often provides a way out to the world of poverty and lack of resources.

Keywords: *Outside Paducah*, J.A. Moad II, American war theatre, legacy of war, trauma in veterans and families, transgenerational war trauma, underprivileged classes

Introduction: *Outside Paducah* in Context

Outside Paducah: The Wars at Home is an independent theatre production scripted and performed solo by James Allen Moad II, a former member of the US Air Force.¹ Premiered in Minneapolis at the Bloomington Center for the Arts on 10 November 2016,² the play has been staged in other locations in the United States, such as New York. It was presented in NYC by Poetic Theater Productions in 2017 in The Wild Project Theatre in East Village and it was nominated for two New York Innovative Theater Awards: 'Outstanding Solo Performance' and 'Innovative Design', receiving an award for the latter.

Set over a summer in 2007 in the area of Kentucky, *Outside Paducah*³ has a three-act structure, each featuring independent stories about the long-term consequences of war in veterans and their families: a child whose father returns from Iraq with brain damage, a

¹ James Allen Moad II is a writer of short stories, poetry and drama. His work has been published in a variety of journals and anthologies, and he is the recipient of the 2014 Consequence Magazine Fiction Award. For more information on Moad II's trajectory and literary accomplishments, please visit his personal website at <https://www.jamesmoad.com/>

² Full list of creative team: L. Cooper (Director), C. Schoenborn (Technical Director/Design), E. Belpedi (Lighting), K. Horowitz (Sound), S. Bauer (Stage Manager); E. Belpedi & J.A. Moad II (Imagery); A.E. Heaney (Costumes), P. C. Hansen (Producer). The scripts of the play were published in the same year 2016 by War-Torn Books, a publishing house founded by the writer. All the textual quotes in this paper come from this 2016 edition.

³ Hereafter, the title of the play will be referred to as such.

middle-aged father whose son from the Marines has committed suicide, and a young soldier on a visit to his hometown after having been deployed to Baghdad. Although the stories revolve around the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan mainly, other wars, such as the Vietnam War and the American Civil War, resonate in the background. The ultimate intention of the play is to show the pernicious legacy of wars in general and the lasting consequences in veterans and American families in the home territories.

American wars in the 21st century have been represented on stage early after conflict outbreak, as in the cases of *Embedded*, by Tim Robbins, 2003, and *The Sandstorm: stories from the front*, by Sean Huze, 2004. However, in the subsequent years after major invasion, and further into protracted confrontations, the need to show, analyse and debate the ‘wars on terror’ persists (Soloski, 2008). The American society that went through the hostilities until Vietnam had a chance of real contact with the war reality through the existence of the draft. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the downsized army, with its all-volunteer composition and the multiplied firepower that resulted in fewer casualties made it more difficult for the public to become aware of the realities and be prompted to react. The shortage of major American stage productions can perhaps be explained by a less politically committed tradition, as well as a need, and popular demand, to align with good-or-evil parties after 9/11 contributed to hiding the work done by small theatres relying on grants or independent funding able to produce more relevant plays, like Marvin Carlson points out in “9/11, Afghanistan, and Iraq: The Response of the New York Theatre” (2004). However, it is also believed that American audiences at that time were in no mood for more war stories (Gordon, 2008).

Still, there have been several small-scale theatrical reactions since 2003 but not at the scale shown in the UK scene, with British Iraq plays like *Stuff Happens*, by David Hare, 2004, and *Guantanamo* by Britain and Slovo, 2004, which overtly questioned the legality of the war and denounced the flaws of democratic decision-making processes. There is a large corpus of plays that equally focus on traumatized veterans, some of which are also performed by veterans. A few examples from the context of UK theatre include Stephens’ *Motortown* (2006); Lichtenstein’s *The Pull of Negative Gravity* (2004); Malcolm’s *Belongings* (2011); Jones’ *Glory Dazed* (2013); Sheers’ *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.* (2012).

The American landscape of approaches span from political criticism delivered through satirical instruments as in *Embedded* or *How’s your Baghdaddy (or How I Started the Iraq War)* by Pailet and Penedo, 2015, or absurd settings that introduce “ghosts” (Fernández-Caparrós, 2007) that relate to *Outside Paducah*, cleverly used to denounce the war, such as *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, 2008, by Rajiv Joseph, to documentary dramas, like *Eyes of Babylon*, 2006, by Jeff Key and *Fallujah*, 2007, by Holmes. The combatant point of view is represented from high action-content plays, like *Surrender* by Fox and Hartley, 2008, and more traditional representations of conflict, such as *Black Watch*, 2008, by G. Burke. The late 2010s saw a collection of plays about the Iraq war where the character of the traumatized veteran also found a noticeable place. In *The Sandstorm*, soldiers represent their experience, with men crazed and haunted by the images of the recent war. In *Beast* (Michael Weller, 2008), the injured soldier story was the base of a not so successful run. The impact of foreign wars at home appeared as a background element for the *Dying City*, by Christopher Shinn, 2007. In a similar fashion to Moad’s play, *American Tet* by Lydia Stryk, 2008, describes a crude portrayal of the harm caused by current wars on American families.

While *Outside Paducah* shares many common themes with other contemporary theatrical representations of war trauma, including plays performed by traumatised soldiers, it moves beyond a veteran's self-representation of his own traumatic memories on stage to encompass a more ambitious reflection on the damage done by war in combatants, family members and the local community—war stands as an open wound to the entire nation. Additionally, Moad's play seeks to incorporate a discussion about the link between impoverished areas and joining the army as one of the few job opportunities for the underprivileged classes. Along this line of thought, *Outside Paducah* highlights a flaw in the system by which national institutions, the ones that are supposed to assist those who serve, lack the material and human resources to attend to the wounded veterans and their families. The play encourages the audience to reflect on a perverse model of behaviour regarding the way soldiers are used and then discarded or even abandoned when no longer needed; combatants as human machines that become useless. The state makes use of individuals to wage wars, but, once they return home, it turns its back away on them, neglecting the war burden by dismissing the emotional, physical and financial struggles in veterans, families, and communities, as if pretending that the traumas would heal on their own and the ghosts would magically vanish.

War, Testimonial Theatre and Dramatherapy

Theatre and war form a historically close relationship. Since the classical tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the theatre has performed war events and narrated the traumatic effects on the people who experience them, directly or indirectly. Representations of war have shifted historically from the mere description of facts to the expression of feelings. In a historic context of progressive decrease or acceptance of tolerance of violence in modern societies, the personal experiences of the soldiers took pre-eminence over the fact-accounting and honour-focused texts of kings, noblemen and high-rank officers. Moreover, as Harari (2007) explains, soldiers' accounts changed easily to a progressive disillusionment and critical attitude towards war during the 20th century.

The greatest traumatic historical events exemplified by the World Wars and genocides gave rise to a different way of dramatizing action, where witnessing becomes the new matter for drama, in which the victims of history reclaim and define the recounting of the story, able to be shared and felt with the audience, in a play which is no longer a mere historical documentary (Malpede, 1997). In this context, the witness enters the category of "flesh-witness" rather than existing as a simple, more neutral "eye-witness" (Harari, 2010) and the playwright adopts the role of intermediation. Sasu defines a 'witness' as someone who can comply with the following three mandatory provisions: presence, perception and transmission, that is "I was there, I saw it, I can tell people" (2013: 8). Even when Moad argues that the stories he writes and performs in *Outside Paducah* are not necessarily or strictly autobiographical, the fact that he was in the military forces and that he grew up in a house with a traumatized veteran father confers the play a semi-autobiographical nature. Yet, *Outside Paducah* moves away from the veteran centred representation, and makes it extensive to families, transcending the witnessing authority and stressing war's broad implications and how it affects all members of society, both veterans and civilians.

The role of theatrical and other artistic representations of war offer a counterbalance narrative of war trauma in a world dominated by hegemonic mass media, which

frequently overshadows alternate forms of representation. On the stage, emotions, reflections and criticism can be delivered to the audience by a counternarrative, or alternative view, even if less constrained by requirements of historical or factual accuracy. As Jeanne Colleran observes in “Disposable Wars, Disappearing Acts: Theatrical Responses to the 1991 Gulf War” (2003), the spread use of visual mainstream media started to have an evident effect in 1991, in the First Gulf War, where television broadcast images directly, round-the-clock from the battlefield constructing a televised war, much like an entertainment production. Spectacularism and immediacy provided a sufficient and comprehensive amount of material that did not need the burden of critical analysis.

In contrast to the mainstream media, literary, artistic and theatrical creations form an alternative framework for a re-evaluation of war, discussion of deeper concepts and dilemmas, allowing the expression of overlooked or repressed voices, and helping to bring about the kind of discussion and debate that is supposed to lie at the heart of democratic cultures. Free from the immediate pressure, and the political, social framework of hegemonic media, independent theatre productions can revive critical response and activate the political conscience and assessment. As Colleran argues: “politically engaged theatre [...] can employ its own [specific language] to call attention to the constructed-ness of media presentations. It can expose the incompleteness, subjectivity or partiality of news reportage” (2003: 631). In this context, the theatre continues to offer another critical alternative, addressing issues in different ways and perspectives that would be otherwise overlooked, as Colleran contends in her 2012 book titled *Theatre and War: Theatrical Responses since 1991*. This can be especially relevant in times of war when democratic values in some societies are under threat and free opinion is censored, but it also applies to the current situations of global undefined state of conflict and exception, where distinctions between war and peace may become blurred (Kaldor, 2006).

Theatre, by sidestepping official discourse and potential censorship, has the potential to give voice to a multitude of real characters and under-represented perspectives and to foster public debate incorporating its audience into the performances (Chou and Bleiker, 2010). The value of the healing experience and the critical commitment of war theatre are both fully recognized, although not without an open debate about the extent to which the stories are representative of the veterans’ lives and problems. The aim is not to reinforce negative stereotypes among the public through the preferential choice of high-impact, worst-case characters and scenarios. Among other critical voices, James Moad, as playwright and performer, regrets there is no other media representation than that of the victim and the hero, which may disregard the complexity of war and post-war related situations:

I realized that despite the overwhelming support for veterans today, civilians are more distanced than ever from those who fight on our nation's behalf. The All-Volunteer Force has created a gulf between those who have served and those who haven't. Over the last few years, I've watched two simple narratives emerge in Hollywood and on TV, that of the victim and the hero. These narratives limit our abilities to engage in a productive dialogue on how to understand the cost of war on a personal level (2019: 147).

Current models of PTSD treatment include a variety of methods that attempt to access, integrate and repair the damaged memories. Many of these approaches encourage the patient to reexperience, recount, replay and re-enact. Thus, a new set of therapies based on the creative arts has established itself in the treatment options for PTSD patients, as shown by Miller and Johnson, in “Drama Therapy in the Treatment of Combat-related

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder” (1997). This has led to the emergence of dramatherapy as a specific and, in some countries, regulated form of therapy using the performance arts as the central element within the therapeutic relationship (Jones, 2015).

But, how useful or feasible would it be to make the real-life victims and sufferers the performers of the play? Such an approach has been tried. In effect, the theatre of self-performance has widely been used as a therapeutic practice for war veterans suffering from PTSD. Deirdre Heddon, in *Autobiography and Performance* (2008), argues that the theatre can become an effective space of empowerment and enunciation for traumatized individuals. The re-enactment of the combatants’ war memories can bring about flashbacks of forgotten episodes. In this sense, the stage becomes a battlefield to revive shocking moments and to recover blocked memories, but it can also become a space for healing open wounds and moving forward.

Testimonial theatre productions function to enable protagonists to recall traumatic events, while, at the same time, provoking an emotional response on the viewers (Jeffers, 2006). A major goal in testimonial theatre is to develop the spectators’ empathy by humanizing the ‘other’ on the stage while becoming the witness of the process the performers once underwent (Miller, 2018).⁴ The empowerment of the audience can then lead to political action, or more specifically, to ‘political mimesis’, as Caroline Wake suggests (2013: 118) by using Gaines’s notion (1999) by which viewers replicate, re-enact or body-back the theatrical experiences, the values and ideals triggered by what they have seen on the stage in different social contexts. In any case, there is an expressed need for more development of theatrical stories focusing primarily on the other components of the veteran affective group, such as family members, that is, exploring, describing and displaying to the general public the reality of the secondary traumatization, as suggested by Bart Pitchford in “Worst-Case Scenarios: A New Canon of Military Plays”, published in *American Theatre*, within a special issue dedicated to Theatre of War (2017).

Collective and Transgenerational War Trauma

Outside Paducah offers readers/viewers an introduction to two perspectives of war trauma that lie beyond the individual representation of traumatised veterans by addressing two main intertwined issues: collective and transgenerational war-related traumas, both in the form of physical wounds and/or moral injuries. Although these two themes are not extensively developed, given the short extension of the play, they are revealed to the audience as a way to reflect on the enduring consequences of war on the American population.

Concepts like PTSD and shellshock first originated in medicine to deal with the physical and psychological consequences of war. As such, they have traditionally been strongly related to the individual combatant, predominantly male, treatment. In *A Crisis of Masculinity? Re-writing the History of Shell-shock and Gender in First World War Britain* (2013), Tracey Loughran’s main contention is that throughout history but

⁴ One example of testimonial theatre is the so-called Theatre of Witness (TOW), an international program created by artistic director Teya Sepinuck in the 1980s in Philadelphia (USA), which places the performers’ life experiences at the center of the whole spectacle. The performers are non-professional actors, people who have experienced or witnessed any type of conflictive or traumatic situation. Performers range from refugees, prisoners, victims of abuse, survivors of war– “people whose stories haven’t been heard” (Theatre of Witness website).

especially in WWI, several cases of post-war trauma in women and non-combatant males were overlooked. This happened because shell-shock was exclusively regarded as a masculine disorder, a condition solely suffered by those who had been in the battleground: “By accepting contemporary evaluations of shell-shock as a masculine disorder, historians have colluded in the exclusion of other groups from the claim to trauma” (734). Besides, an excessive focus on veterans’ personal processes of change risks hiding the fact that their post-service lives are connected to the collective political, social, and economic contexts (Zogas, 2017). Secondary traumatization was described as early as 1983 to describe the condition of family members of war veterans suffering PTSD. The development of this concept was a movement forward in the process of recognition of the harm done to the collective body, yet the effects and treatment of secondary traumatization are still often overlooked.

The enduring consequences of war reach entire social networks. Moad prompts, through geographical and social descriptions in the play, the extent of the decay suffered by rural mainland American communities and links this with the impact of these wars fought far abroad by people from these areas. The three stories in the play are set around the city of Paducah, Kentucky, between the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, a deprived area of the country. Joining the army, for most of these unprivileged youngsters, is one of the few opportunities to get a decent job and improve their lives and the lives of their families. Unfortunately, many of them come home with the war burden and pass it on to the younger generations. The play highlights this quandary and the poverty spiral, expanding from material to psychological weakness, suffered by entire communities that lack the means to revert their situation, and where individual injuries become collective suffering.

Research on the net effects of military spending and military interventions abroad show contradictory or non-conclusive results about whether they cause an economic stimulus or depression. In the USA, with a constant pattern of exterior-only conflicts, it is arguable that the effect on public spending has a generally positive effect on the economy (Stein and Russett, 1980). It has also been shown, however, that this military spending, if channelled to other socially important areas, could have created even more net jobs (Garrett-Peltier, 2014). Financing policies of these military interventions have likewise determined a set of economic conditions, such as inflation, that impact negatively mostly on the less favoured people (Zielinski, 2018). It has also been pointed out by Arthur Stein in his book *The nation at War* (1980) that, in the absence of an exterior and imminent threat, a process of militarization does not lead to a more cohesive society, but precisely the opposite.

Aside from coping with the post-war related situations, several of these underlying social issues surface in the stories. In *Outside Paducah*, the characters struggle against lack of funds and previous situations of violence at home—such as domestic violence, racial discrimination, unemployment, limited resources from the VA centres, among others. By incorporating these other troubles, the play reflects a complex net of class, gender, race and socioeconomic factors, denouncing, at the same time, a lack of resources and assistance from the state, or other governmental institutions, to tackle these social problems of the underprivileged sectors. The characters seem to possess neither the capacity nor the resources to overcome the open wounds and move towards a more prosperous future. The play itself offers no solutions either and therefore, the overall final message is one of hopelessness.

The class and racial issues are made especially explicit in the second act with a portrayal of the precarious life in a rundown town in rural America. Part two, titled *Cairo*

(pronounced *K-Row*⁵), portrays a 51-year-old white man, outside a bank and then in the bank manager's office in Ballard County, Kentucky, in July 2007. The backdrop displays photos of Cairo, Illinois, depicting racial strife and decay, followed by the image of a devastated Iraq during the war. The audience is encouraged to link the war waged on far-off Iraqi communities with another battle directed against the poorer rural American communities. Cairo, Illinois, is a town that has been devastated by economic decline, racism and white flight, leading to extensive depopulation, “the embodiment of what the destructive nature of racism can do to a place”, as Moad puts it (2019). The play refers to the racial tension in the city: “‘bout how those old slaves built it into something’ special: mansions and music halls...the cobblestone streets...prosperous times back before The Klan come to town—before the white folks gave up and run off” (p. 33⁶). Cairo becomes a central element in the second story and is personified: “Cairo didn’t die cuz of poor black folks. Cairo died from a broken heart”

The Ghosts at Home

As previously mentioned, *Outside Paducah* seeks to display the notion of a permanent trauma originating in past conflicts till it becomes entrenched within families and community members. These traumatic trails are referred to as “ghosts” on stage— Act 1, in fact, is titled *Our Ghost*. These ghosts stretch back to the Vietnam War, Second World War and even more remotely, to the American Civil War. The play shows these war memories as an intergenerational curse, transmitted to descendants in the form of a non-temporal, non-specific traumatic harm, like a psychological disability at family level, or a genetically transmitted disease. In this context, the different wars fought by the American nation would simply be feedback processes of the recurrent ghosts made evident in the play. The concept of intergenerational or transgenerational trauma is employed in psychology to describe the impossibility of change or improvement, and the consequent sense of despair. This concept is subject to debate since there is no apparent biological basis and studies are often non-conclusive, and the available clinical research is limited to the effects of trauma on just one generation further (Dekel and Goldblatt, 2008).

Several manifestations of war-related traumas in veterans and family members can be traced in the play—ghosts come to invade entire scenes. The most evident ghost manifests itself in Act I, *Our Ghost*, which features Moad playing the part of a seven-year-old boy from Mound City, Illinois, whose father has returned from Iraq with permanent brain damage: “He’s got what folks ‘round here call *the slowness* [Sic!]” (p. 18). Choosing Mound City as the location of this first scene is highly symbolic. The town had been named after an Indian burial site, and when Moad got to know about the existence of the Confederate Monument in the National Cemetery outside town, it all made sense to him: “those ghosts must be talking to each other” (Moad cited in King, 2016). Ghosts are the central element in this first act, which reveal the horrendous war memories as well as the daily reminder of the pain and suffering. Ghosts that return, reproduce and perpetuate as the country embarks on new wars, making ghosts out of men.

The entire first act takes place the day the family is moving away so the father can join a VA centre for rehabilitation. As this boy struggles to comprehend the dimension of the

⁵ Other than the pronunciation, this may stand for ‘K’ for the white supremacist group KKK and ‘row’ for argument.

⁶ The quotations from the scripts come from the 2016 edition will be indicated by the page number only.

tragedy, his feelings are divided between fear of the unknown future that awaits him, and hope for a recovery of the father: “we’d leave that old ghost behind” (p. 12). The house they are about to leave seems to be haunted by memories and traumas; a ghost has been dwelling in the house for a long time. In his innocent mind, the boy believes that the ghost comes at night when he hears the father shouting and crying in the middle of the night due to horrible nightmares: “Last week the ghost did some awful screaming in the night” (p. 13) [...] “Sometimes at night it puts off a horrible howlin’ sound, and I hide under the blanket” (p. 15). The ghost in these former lines is clearly the personification of what is left of the father—no longer the man he used to be, but the shadow of his new self, tormented by recurrent war flashbacks.

There is a long history of war traumas in the mother’s family, who, much as the boy himself, also underwent a similar experience as a child since her father suffered from severe PTSD: “Mama says there’s been a ghost on the land as long as she can recall. It comes and goes, and I know she’s right cuz she told me about the screamin’ back when she was a girl” (p. 15). It is then revealed to the audience that the boy’s grandfather committed suicide. To try and make some sense of this tragedy the boy blames the ghost that inhabits the house, while he argues that his grandfather was, in fact, trying to kill it: “My grandpa tried to kill the ghost [...] it got on Grandpa so bad that he took a shot at it—BANG...but he missed ... Bullet went right through Grandpa’s brain instead. Killed him dead. Mama don’t say nothin’ about it, since it was her daddy” (p. 14). This last sentence shows how the mother avoids talking about her childhood traumas, tragic memories still too painful for her to bring them into the present. Not being able to talk openly about it implies that her wound is not cured. Over and above this, she needs to keep struggling with the consequences of war in her adult life with her disabled husband.

The story of the family misfortunes dates way back to the American Civil War, when Lieutenant Joseph James, an ancestor, was rewarded with a hundred acres of land in the vicinity for his heroism during the war. Due to unemployment and money shortage, descendants kept splitting the land and losing almost all the properties. The boy reckons that it is Lt James's ghost who is mad at the younger generations for the mishandling of the family assets. Even the house where the boy lives seems to be on mortgage: “the bank’s gonna take it back” (p. 19). The mother, in her role of full-time caretaker, is prevented from finding employment elsewhere, the disability pension not being not enough apparently. This shows how the family struggles not only with the father’s health but also with financial difficulties, which connects once more with the struggle of the unprivileged classes and the lack of financial aid for those in need. Lt James is buried in the local cemetery where there used to be a picture of him dressed in the civil war uniform. This picture got lost during a flood and was never replaced. This suggests that war heroes are forgotten and their sacrifices for the nation get scarce recognition. Moad here is pointing an accusing finger at the governmental institutions for not taking care of war memorials or war statues to preserve the collective memory. What is even more dramatic than conserving the memorabilia of the war heroes is the tragic loss of people and the remaining traumas for the families, wives and children.

The play deals with the enduring consequences of war disability in veterans and how this has a direct repercussion in the children of those injured veterans: “the perpetuation of war trauma reverberating down through generations” (Moad 2019: 147). Moad reflects on the incorporation of secondary traumatization in children in his play, as he calls for the need to attend those children of veterans who suffer the consequences of war at home:

I also realized that many of the children of veterans shared similar experiences to mine. I pictured hundreds of thousands of kids across the nation, struggling to understand a father or mother who'd been forever altered by their experiences in combat. Kids who are confused and ashamed with a quiet rage building within, many of them who had or will endure childhoods underscored by anger and violence, broken families and suicides, as well as drug and alcohol abuse (Moad 2019: 147-148).

There are autobiographical traces in the whole play, but the ones in this first act are notable. Moad's father, a paratrooper for the U.S. Army who served in Vietnam, suffered PTSD for years which manifested in recurring nightmares, the shouting and screaming at night waking up the entire family: "his son's earliest memories are haunted by the sound of his father—a proud, strapping, fearless man—screaming in his sleep" (King, 2016). The author openly admits that he intended to tell the story of his father: "For years, I've considered how to tell a story about my father, a veteran of the Vietnam War. I've been hesitant, concerned it might come across as a cliché or as an embarrassment for him, and uncertain if I could render it with the justice it deserves" (Moad 2019: 144). As his own father might have been a role model that influenced Moad's decision of joining the Air Force Academy, the veteran father figure appears as a role model especially in acts 1 and 2 as well: "I wanna be a SNIPER [Sic!] some day [...] I know it's in me, cuz my papa was a sniper [...] he was good at shootin' (p. 14); I was hopin' to be like my daddy" (p. 29).

Conclusions

Outside Paducah contributes to promoting the stage as a dynamic place to think about the war legacy and to question and challenge war itself, as a counterbalance to dominant media discourse. The trauma of war in veterans and family members is portrayed as the inclusion of how war invades and upsets the lives of American families who at the same time are unprotected as they receive little assistance from the state. Modern-day American wars are not usually fought within their own territory, nevertheless, they spread suffering among many more people at home than mainstream thinking assumes and accepts. The play shows that the scenes of war are brought back to the homes and families who become equally demoralized in the perpetuation of war in their homeland. The fighters return as ghosts of their previous selves and infect their families and friends from one generation to another. Moad makes a point about how underprovided classes are particularly exposed and more vulnerable to be trapped in these dynamics.

References

- Carlson M (2004) 9/11, Afghanistan, and Iraq: The Response of the New York Theatre. *Theatre Survey* 45 (1): 3–17
- Caruth C (1996) *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.
- Colleran J (2003) Disposable Wars, Disappearing Acts: Theatrical Responses to the 1991 Gulf War. *Theatre Journal* 55 (4): 613-632.

- Colleran J (2012) *Theatre and War: Theatrical Responses since 1991*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chou M and Bleiker, R (2010) Dramatizing War: George Packer and the Democratic Potential of Verbatim Theater. *New Political Science*, 32 (4): 561-574.
- Kaldor M (2006) *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity
- Dekel R and Goldblatt H (2008) Is there intergenerational transmission of trauma? The case of combat veterans' children. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 78(3), 281–289.
- Fernández-Caparrós A (2007) Iraqi Ghosts in the Heart of America: Rajiv Joseph's Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo. *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 50 (2), 35-52.
- Gaines JM (1999) Political Mimesis. *Collecting Visible Evidence*. Ed. JM Gaines and M Renov. Minneapolis: University of Michigan Press, pp. 84-102.
- Garrett-Peltier H (2014) *The Job Opportunity Cost of War*. Costs of War Working Paper. Providence RI, USA, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University.
- Gordon J (2008) *Framing Anti-War Theatre: Public Perceptions of Embedded*. All Graduate Theses and Dissertations. 191. Logan UT, USA, Utah State University.
- Harari YN (2007) Military Memoirs: A Historical Overview of the Genre from the Middle Ages to the Late Modern Era. *War in History* 14 (3): 289-309.
- Harari, YN (2010) Armchairs, Coffee and Authority: Eye-witnesses and Flesh-witnesses Speak about War, 1100-2000. *The Journal of Military History* 74 (1): 53-78.
- Heddon D (2008) *Autobiography and Performance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeffers A (2006) Refugee Perspectives: the practice and ethics of verbatim theatre and refugee stories. *Platform* 1 (1): 1-17.
- Jones P (2015) Trauma and dramatherapy: dreams, play and the social construction of culture. *South African Theatre Journal* 28 (1): 4-16.
- King C (2016) Granite City Veteran Brings 'Wars at Home' to the Stage in Minneapolis in *St. Louis Magazine*. Available at: <https://www.stlmag.com/culture/theater/granite-city-veteran-brings-wars-at-home-to-the-stage-in-minneapolis/> (accessed 15 July 2020)
- Loughran T (2013) A Crisis of Masculinity? Re-writing the History of Shell-shock and Gender in First World War Britain. *History Compass*, 11: (9): 727-738.
- Malpede K (1997) Theatre at 2000: A Witnessing Project. In Strozier CB and Flynn M (eds) *The Year 2000: Essays on the End*. New York and London: New York UP: 299-308.

- Miller J (2018) The Transformative and Healing Power of Theatre of Witness. *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* 30 (2): 47-56.
- Miller J and Johnson DR (1997) Drama Therapy in the Treatment of Combat-related Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 23 (5): 383-395.
- Moad II JA (2016) *Outside Paducah: The Wars at Home*. Northfield: War-Torn Books.
- Moad II JA (2019) Veterans' Voices: Our Shared Story. In Brown R and Leonard S (eds) *Why We Write: Craft Essays on Writing War*. Johnston, Iowa: Middle West Press LLC: 144-148.
- Pitchford B (2017) Worst-Case Scenarios: A New Canon of Military Plays. *AMERICAN THEATRE*. Available at: <https://www.americantheatre.org/2017/02/22/worst-case-scenarios-a-new-canon-of-military-plays/> (accessed 12 August 2020).
- Sasu L (2013) Witness Literature: A Conceptual Framework. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov Series IV: Philology and Cultural Studies* 6 (55.2): 7-12.
- Soloski A (2008) Oppositional political theatre isn't dead in the US. *The Guardian*, 12/12/08. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2008/dec/12/political-theatre-america> (accessed on 2 December 2020).
- Stein AA (1980) *The nation at War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Stein AA and Russett BC (1980) Evaluating War: Outcomes and Consequences. In *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*, Edited by Ted Robert Gurr. New York: The Free Press, 399-422.
- Theatre of Witness (2017) What is Theatre of Witness. Available at: <https://theaterofwitness.org/about/> (accessed 14 August 2020).
- Wake C (2013) To Witness Mimesis: The Politics, Ethics, and Aesthetics of Testimonial Theatre in *Through the Wire*. *Modern Drama* 56.1: 102-125.
- Zielinski RC (2018) *How Do War Financing Strategies Lead to Inequality? A Brief History from the War of 1812 through the Post-9/11 Wars*. Providence RI, USA, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University.
- Zogas A (2017) US Military Veterans' Difficult Transitions Back to Civilian Life and the VA's Response. The University of Washington. Available at: http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2017/Zogas_Veterans%27%20Transitions_CoW_2.1.17.pdf (accessed 8 December 2020).