



## On Cullen on H. Bruce Franklin, *Crash Course: From the Good War to the Forever War*. [MiWSR 2020-016]

Response by H. Bruce Franklin, Rutgers University.

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My twenty books have, of course, evoked all kinds of reviews since the first one appeared fifty-seven ago. But the review of my *Crash Course* that appeared recently in the *Michigan War Studies Review* may be the most misleading. I will not attempt to correct its many falsifications and misrepresentations about the book itself. But I cannot allow the reviewer to get away with creating a fictional biography of me.

The fictional Bruce Franklin is a privileged person who did not work as a tugboat mate in New York Harbor during the murderous gang wars of the mid-1950s and did not fly as a Strategic Air Command Arctic navigator and intelligence officer. I am supposedly not grateful for having “benefitted from opportunities unavailable to previous generations, including a scholarship to attend Amherst College and G.I. Bill funding of his graduate work at Stanford.” Well, I am not grateful because I never got either a scholarship to attend Amherst or any G.I. Bill funding for graduate work at Stanford. I worked my way through Amherst, including two summers working in a most educational sweatshop furniture factory which the reviewer replaces with a brief stint in “a furniture store.” As explained in *Crash Course*, my wife and I had saved enough from my Air Force flight pay, augmented with speculation in Silicon Valley startups, to pay for my Stanford graduate work. The reviewer’s intentions are best revealed by this bizarre invention: “In retirement,” Franklin “continues to take out his sailboat on a weekly basis.” I have never owned a boat, much less a sailboat. Why invent this?

There’s less mystery about the reviewer’s most vicious concoction. He claims that my defense in the Stanford hearing that led to my firing was undermined when “his wife came with an (unloaded) rifle.” That would have been a crime, and of course it never happened.