**John Crosby:** Thank you for your service and I go, "You're welcome?". I don't know really how to respond to that. And so when I thought about this, this idea of thanking me, thanking a veteran for their service. I have to go back to, you know, why am I a veteran? I'm a veteran of the United States Army. I'm a veteran of the United States Armed Forces. Up here are slides five, six. or seven is the code of conduct for American soldiers. In article 1 of the code of conduct is I am an American, I serve in the force which guard our country and protect our way of life. I'm prepared to give my life in their defense and so when you say you thank me for your service, we’ll you’re American. We're all Americans. I thank you for your service. I mean, from a participatory democracy perspective, we need everyone engaged. We need everyone involved in this process. And so when I say, when you say thank for my service, I'm hoping to get you involved in thanking you for your service because our service is necessary in these times. Our service as Americans, true Americans is vital at this stage in our history, so thank you for your service and I thank you for your service.
My Service

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  - Infantryman, Legal/Promotions Clerk
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John Crosby: So once again this is just my service from a military perspective. I enlisted on October 1984 as a private first class. I went to Fort Benning, Georgia harmony church. The whole movie scene where the, you know, the people are on the bus and the drill sergeant gets on the bus and goes," Alright you fucken maggots. Get off the bus!", that's exactly what happened to me. And, so we’re all sitting there going, "Holy shit," it’s like 4 o'clock in the morning. We all stand up, we all come stumbling fuck out of the bus. And then easily have us do push-ups. You know, push Georgia down. For the next 13 weeks I push Georgia down. We do, we crawl through the gravel, we wake up at 5 o'clock morning, and we do lovely runs like 3 mile runs to the Georgia countryside. You throw up on the side of the road, lots and lots of fun. It was 13 weeks of just basic crap but it was interesting. The guy, my bunk mate was from Georgia and he had this lovely story of how he had sex with an animal. So, that was, you know, lots of fun, good times. So that's infantry training. Infantry training Fort Benning, Georgia for 13 weeks.

Then I deployed to Germany in January of 1985. I was engaged at the time to my wife. She was stupid enough to say yes. And then I get to Germany and I'm an infantryman and we're in Germany and we drive in these, you know, these aluminum cans around called APCs and we're supposed to defend Germany. We're defending Germany against the Soviets. The Soviets have a huge, the eighth Soviet Shock Army, hundreds of thousands of men pour into Germany, kill all Germans. Go on to France, kill the French and essentially retake Europe. And that was the Soviet battle plan. And so the US Army's purpose in Germany was essentially to, essentially die. We were to be like dips, die in place. So the Soviets would attack, we’d rush out there and we’d showed the Soviets that Americans are dying. And basically that's, that's what our purpose was. And then of course Americans would, you know, we’d, we all get riled up because all these dead Americans. We'd come back free Japan, free France, free Germany, World War III is over. Only about 30, 40 million dead. No
big deal. That was the plan and I did that for, well actually just couple of months because I graduated from UCLA. I have a bachelor's degree in international relations. I couldn't, you know, really find a job with a bachelor's degree from international relations of UCLA. So, all you IR majors out there [laughing] I couldn't just, so they go, “Oh wow you can read.”, “Yea, I graduated from UCLA.”, “We want to bring you up to the Battalion”. So I became the Battalion legal clerk. Essentially I handled article 15’s, UCMJ, Uniform Code of Military Justice. So when a soldier got drunk, or a soldier DUI, or soldier beat up another soldier, or they missed formation, they come to me and say we want to punish this soldier for doing X, Y, and Z. And so I would write up a legal paperwork. I present it to the commander, the commander would then go through motions and so on and so forth. A lot of fun things, there is also the promotions clerk and so once a month the sergeant major and the first sergeants of each of the companies would have a, essentially a promotion. I wouldn't say ceremony, promotion board and, so if you wanted to become a sergeant you want to become a sergeant in the United States Army, you'd put in your packet and then you go for board of NCOs. Your first sergeant and sergeant majors. And so there’s these five guys sitting there and they essentially grill the poor soldier. You know, for about, I don't know, 40 minutes about all kinds of weird stuff. All army related stuff. And, you know, as a, I'm the specialist I'm sitting there writing the stuff down. Writing down all the notes. Those individuals that were promoting or they, they accepted that they had a responsibility. So the ones that were, the ones that didn't make, weren’t accepted for promotion, everybody knew that they wouldn’t get accepted for promotion because either they lacked bearing or they, they lack the standard intelligence. And so from a meritocracy perspective, as a promotion clerk I clearly saw that the army did promote people that were bright or at least somewhat intelligent. And at least somewhat of military bearing and those who didn't, those who didn't meet the standards, weren't promoted. And so this idea of meritocracy within the army is, is I see that clearly especially at the lower levels. And as I bump up the
food chain, it becomes less and less clear but at the basic level at the social level if you're confident you will get promoted. If you do what your first sergeant tells you to do, you obey the orders and you make sure everything is squared away, you will get promoted. I mean, there's just no if's and's or but's about it. And it's relatively simple and it's a fair meritocracy. As far as the lower enlisted in the military's concern. I left, well, I got married brought my wife back from Los Angeles. What, 19? So she follows me to Germany and then I go," Here's the apartment that I got," and 10 days later, I was out on the field for a month. So she's all by herself in Germany, doesn't speak the language. You know, lots of fun, good times. But I'm in the field for a month. So the army it's interesting as far as Athens, so it was a good tour. Came back and I was stationed at Fort Irwin, California. I went through promotion board, I went to the same promotion board, same sergeant major, and same first sergeant said, I was a clerk for, they gave me a promotion board things, so I passed. I became a sergeant, I was at Fort Irwin, California. And Fort Irwin, California is the national training center and the big bad, the enemy that we're supposed to fight in 1985 was? That's the question, keep making sure you're awake. You guys tracking? So who's the enemy that the United States supposed to fight in 1985?

**Audience Member:** The Soviets.

**John Crosby:** The Soviets! That's right, so national training center is, we have a whole army unit replicating the Soviet Army. And so we have this we, we have this, we have essentially an armored brigade of Soviet stuff and it's all U.S. stuff. That they just slap fiberglass on to make it look like Soviet equipment. So I got a tank, a real army tank it was an M-551 Sheridan, which is air droppable. They put a bunch of fiberglass on it to make it look like a Soviet BMP, which is an entry vehicle. And then you slap lasers on them and so what you have is you have laser tag with tanks, so imagine 4 o'clock in the morning, traveling through
the desert and you're shooting at American tanks with lasers. And, then if they hit you first your light goes off. Weep, weep, weep, weep. If you hit them first, their light goes off. Weep, weep and they're dead. And, so if you're dead you just, well you want to be dead because if you're dead what happens?

**Audience Member:** You go back to bed.

**John Crosby:** You go to sleep. That's very good because you stop your tank. You turn the, turnaround and you just... and you wait for NDEX. In about 12 o'clock in the afternoon and they'll go," NDEX, NDEX, NDEX, all units NDEX". And you wake up, oh god, and you drive to your little cont-omen area and then you wait for the next attack the next day. I did that for a year. Lots of fun, ungodly amount of time in the desert. We did that, god how many times we've, 14 times a year, 2 weeks, 15 times and a year. We were in the desert a lot. And that was fun. I got to kill me, I speak good American English, I put a little Soviet flag in my tank. My flight in the battle of a Soviets flag flying off. 5M1 tanks, five American tanks. Americans are idiots. Horrible, we're stupid. Got to kill a bunch of Americans. I mean notionally kill Americans I didn't actually kill Americans but it was notionally. So that was a lot of fun. My OCS packet finally got approved, so about three years, four months of being an enlisted I got accepted into OCS, which is Officer Candidate School. So I get to go to back to Fort Benning. Fort Benning, anybody ever been to Fort Benning? Except for my wife. Don't, don't go there. I don't recommend it, it's a horrible place. Humidity, out of the zoo. I mean literally you take a shower and you're wet. What the fuck, over. Fort Benning, so I spent 14 weeks. What?

**Audience Member:** Did you apply for [inaudible] school like...
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**John Crosby:** While in the army, yes.

**Audience Member:** Were you like, enlisted and then you were like, oh I'm [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** No as soon as I got to my first duty station I essentially started putting my packet in.

**Audience Member:** So, it took [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** It took like two years. Nothing goes quickly, everything goes relatively slowly and this was fine. I mean this actually, I got some experiences in enlisted, and experiences in NCO. So it wasn't bad but it takes a while and your paper work can get messed up. Your paper work can get lost, a file can't be formed properly and then they, oh you didn't dot this T’s. Oh, you're fucked and, so yea. So when you join the military you're rolling dice. You're literally, it's just crap shit. Sometimes you roll a 7 and sometimes your, you find yourself sleeping in APC. You know, off the side of the road and it snows on you and you wake up and you got a foot of snow on you and you go oh, this wonderful. Which is what happened to me in Germany. Anyways, Officer Candidate School, 16 weeks, infantry training, no excuse me. Yeah, Officer Candidate School. Infantry Officer Basic, where they cram eight weeks, they literally cram eight weeks of training into those 16 weeks. I've never been so bored in my, my entire life. You sit there, oh fucking god, kill me now. I mean, think about your worst class with your worst instructors. Stab, Stab. I go through that, airborne training. Airborne training is kind of fun. You sitting, you know, they teach you how to land. They spend like 2, 3 weeks, this is how you land. Feet, knees together, twist your hips. Land on your hips. Okay, what the fuck. I'm jumping out of this airplane as those things, feet, knees together, twist my hips and then this little dance. While I'm falling to the earth, that
I'm like this lump. I'm going down. This female, female airborne people, they're up there forever. They jump out, they're like 102 pounds. So, feet and knees and they say the problem is don't look at the ground because if you look at the ground, you're going to open your legs up and then you'll shatter both your ankles and you'll never walk again. Oh, I don't want to do that. Feet and knees, feet and knees, feet and knees, look at the horizon and that's all I think about. I'm not going to do this twisting of my hips and trying to look at the ground and do this. I'm just going to do feet and knees, feet and knees, feet, butt, back of the head. Five jumps, feet, butt, back of the head. Sorry about that. So, anyways, that was a lot of fun. Couple of night’s jumps and by night jumps I mean I close my eyes and I hold my head. But, they were all great. You only had to go to the airborne school, yeah. And, my last jump, which was fun. Jump out of the aircraft, shoot automatically dip-lodes and they tell you that sometimes the air will lift the shoot and it'll just start, it'll fold in on itself and then you go. And, then you become the smoke and whole on the ground. So, I look up and the shoots folding in on me. I'm going, whoa you bastard don't. And, pops back out and I just, I still pull on them to the ground but I'm alive. And, I think I got some sort of brain trauma because you know, feet, butt, back of the head. Holy lord, so that's why I am the way I am. That was a lot of fun. I get my jump-wings and I'm good to go.
John Crosby: I go to Fort Ord, which is at Monterey, California. Beautiful location. I'm a platoon leader, which is 7th in-prevision light, 9th and Regiment. And, I'm literally gone I think 300 days out of the year, so either we're deployed, we're in training, 400 legate, we're in NTC, we go to NTC and we get our ass handed to us by the, by the off ford. I become the company executive officer, we invade Panama and I clearly remember as an infantry lieutenant, my platoon, we get orders to go to Panama. President Bush, as I will, eventually heard of him as King George the first but President Bush says we need to enforce something, whatever, and whatever in Panama. I don't know, I'm just happy and it's my temperament, I'm a platoon leader. I got a platoon of infantry, we got machine guns, we got grenades, and we're going to invade a foreign country. And you know, most my mind is like this euphoric, part me is like, oh I can get killed, I don't care, I'm going to go invade an foreign country. And so we go to Panama but this isn't, this is just [inaudible], this isn't December of 1989, and this is in May of 1989. See, Bush is just trying to poke Noriega. He's not trying to get rid of him now, he's just trying to poke him. See what he does and, so we land, we have no ammunition. And so they put us in a bus, a bus, no ammunition and they put us up and down the Panama Canal for a couple days with no ammunition. So me and the platoon sergeants started going, “What the fuck is going to happen if Noriega tries to do something. We'll, we're going to die.” And I think that's what was part of the intent was just trying to prod Noriega to do something but nothing happened, of course. We live, we have a lot of fun, come back to, come back to Fort Ord. I get put as an executive officer. My company gets tapped to invade Panama, for real in December. So, my firstborn son is born, Chris, is born December 9, 1989 and we get orders to invade Panama on December 19, 1989. So I get on a plane, fly for fuckin’ ever, we land in Panama, I'm going to get to do the Panama invasion. Which was interesting. You know because we're invading a foreign country for the United Sates, you know, I'm not an idiot. International relations, well I am an idiot but we're invading a foreign country, so I expect the Panamanians to be, you know
kind off pissed off. But for the most part the Panamanian’s would act..., I have an infantry platoon behind me, I got machine guns, I got hand grenades. So the Panamanian people they're not going, down with the oppressors, get out American imperialist. They're coming up with sodas, want a Coke, hot-dog, okay? And they come up and they tell you, they essentially rant on each other, oh she works for Noriega. Arrest her, arrest her and we're like going, “Okay?” It was completely surreal experience and we arrested this one lady, who was the secretary to Noriega. And this woman came up to me and just, I'm a lawyer in Panama. Sorry I shouldn't do that racist accent, but she was a lawyer, she's from Panama and I think she was going to give me the 3rd degree because what, we don't have the authority to arrest Panamanian nationals. We're just doing this because we're America and we're just, we're just fucked up. But, and so I'm expecting some sort of push back from her and she says, I want to thank you for helping our people becoming freer by removing Noriega and I'm going this is the exact opposite of what I expected her to say. Not to say that we were right in invading Panama but I just didn't, it was just kind of surreal. So we do that, Panama, NTC, where we get killed, JRTC, which is, anybody been to Arkansas? Another place. Oh, you've been in Arkansas. Avoid it.

**Audience Member:** [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Oh, yea. See, horrible place. Don't go to Arkansas either. So two places to avoid, Georgia and Arkansas. Arkansas, Desert Shield. This is an interesting story. I worked for the Bayonet Combat Support Brigade and, so for Desert Shield we spun up to go invade. No not invade, liberate Kuwait from Saddam Hussein in 1990. A bunch of National Guard units and army reserve units got activated. And they were activated to go support American operations in Iraq or in Kuwait. And my unit was tasked to help these National Guard units and these reserve units get spun up, so they can be prepared to go to Kuwait.
The National Guard units, the California National Guard units would, they knew which units were going to be activated, so they put the best troops in those units. They put the best equipment in those units and, so when the Army activated the 88th Transportation Company, it had that, the best equipment and the best soldiers that the California National Guard could do. And so it'd go over there and do a really good mission. I go, wow that's and they did really well going through the preparation to go overseas. The ARCOM units, the Army Reserve Units, did the exact opposite. They knew which units were going to be activated and so they stripped it of all its good people. Put in diabetics, drunkards, the worst equipment it possibly could have and then when we quizzed the general because me and the Colonel asked the General, “Why the fuck are you doing this?” He says, “The U.S. Army is going to fix it. Once you activate it, that becomes the US Army Unit and, so you're going to have to fill it, with good personnel and fill it with good equipment. And so when we get it back at the end of the conflict we'll have brand new equipment and I won't have to give any of my good people up to go fight.” And so when you look at and that was my first glimpse of how fucked up things could be because we're going to war and there's commanders, senior commanders who don't care about troops, don't care about the mission. All they care about is feathering their own nest and making themselves more comfortable. And I'll see that in spades when we actually go invade Iraq in 2003 but as a Junior Lieutenant I'm going, man that's fucked up. I mean, if I had a gun, I'd probably would have shot him because I just think that was wrong but that's what happened. So, Desert Shield, two children, Chris and Rachel. Rachel, redheaded. Become a Military Intelligence Officer. I'm what 30, holy shit. Unlike 31, 32 years old this time and so Fort Ord is a light infantry unit. And by light infantry unit, it means we don't have any jeeps to drive around in. Everything is walking. We do LPC, we call them leather personnel carriers. We walk everywhere, so by walking everywhere you had to have your rucksack on your back. So you had this 90, 100 pound rucksack of all your goods, all your food, all your crap and your and
we walk everywhere. So it's like 2 o'clock in the morning I'm walking around, 100 ligate, it's called Site Alpha, it seems like 10,000 feet but it's probably, you know, it's just a mountain. About ready to die and I go, I need to get out of the infantry. I need to stop this walking. I want be a military intelligence person and be smart, so I changed branches and I became a military intelligence officer. I go to Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Arizona is not too bad. Do that, I go to Germany and I get stationed in 5th Corps, which is the army headquarters for, 5th Corps is basically the army headquarters for all of, most army units in Germany and during, while I was at Germany while I was in fifth Corps, we saw Rwanda spinning up. And, Rwanda where the whole thing would be, Hutus killing the Tutsis and I'm thinking to myself as an officer, we should do something about this. This is what the army is for, this is what the US Military is for, is to prevent these kind of atrocities. We talked about the lessons we learned from the genocide, by not doing something against the Jewish Holocaust in World War II and just sitting on our hands and allowing the stuff to occur. And we see this happening in relatively slow motion and it takes, you know, weeks and months and these people aren't sophisticated. It's not like they have rockets and stuff. They have machetes, they're killing hundreds of thousands of people over a period of weeks with freaken machetes. You know give me an infantry platoon or an infantry probably a battalion I can stop people from killing each other with machetes because I got rifle and I got machine guns. But we do nothing. We sit on our hands and just do nothing. So I do that for a year and a half.

I get transferred to become the S2 for the 12th Aviation Brigade and it's kind of like this same thing over again. You know, we have, anybody know operation provide comfort? Is where we're actually helping the Kurds, so immediately after King George I urges the courage to rise up against Saddam Hussein and they, we don't do anything about it and the Iraqi Arabs are killing the Kurds and start pushing the Kurds north. We do a no-fly zone, 36
parallel and we decide to help the Kurds. It's called operation provide comfort, where we send in American helicopters, we drop in these Kurdish villages, we hand out food, we inoculate Kurds children, we give them blankets we do all kinds of humanitarian things for Kurds. Which is a great thing, right? Helping the Kurds. Well we fly out of Turkey and the Turks hate the Kurds. If you look at any map along the Kurdish Turkey border, along the Kurdish Iraqi border, the really detailed maps, village destroyed, village destroyed, village destroyed, village destroyed, village destroyed, villages destroyed, village destroyed, village destroyed, village destroyed. Villages are destroyed along the border, why? Because the Turks killed them and since we're providing help for the Kurds, every US helicopter that flies out of Turkey has to have a Turkish military officer on there. And, so every time we fly black hawk to provide, here have a blanket, here [Inaudible] your children. There's a Turkish military officer on board that helicopter and guess what branch of service is that Turkish military officer. He's an artillery officer. A field artillery officer, what is he doing? He's writing down grid coordinates. He's writing down targets, so when we fly back to that village, two months later, three months later, guess what, its village was destroyed because the Turks have found a Kurdish enclave and have destroyed it. With our help, unknowingly. Now the air, the helicopter pilots our helicopter pilot hated the Turks. They wanted to push them off the helicopters but because of the politics of the issue, we didn’t, we just kept doing the same game over and over again.

And then Bosnia. We have a mission to extract the Dutch peacekeepers out of Srebrenica. Srebrenica if anybody remembers Srebrenica, it's about 7000 Bosnian, Muslim Bosniaks, Muslim Bosnia's were killed by the Serbs. We watched that, I watched it as a military intelligence officer. Our unit was prepared to go in and help the Dutch, when the Dutch decided to tuck their tail between their legs and run away those 7000 Bosnian Muslims were lined up, put into a field and executed and we just sat there and watched it. We had a
full mission ready to go save the Dutch but we couldn't, we couldn't save those Bosnian civilians. Once, again it's, it's when we look at these events it's kind of frustrating to see those events because you know as an American, our job, I thought our job was to protect. To advance American values, advance American liberties. To show that we're the good guys and we're just sitting on our hands, it's just very distressing.

So, Germany after Germany...
John Crosby: back to the states 1996 to 2004. I was a company commander in San Angelo, Texas. My third child, Allison, was born in Texas. San Angelo's is actually a nice place. Middle of freaken nowhere. Think of middle of nowhere Texas, it's there. But it's actually a decent place to live. Do that, I become the G2 Operations Officer, which G2 is intelligence. US third army Atlanta, Georgia. Fourth child, Nicky. I do a tour in Kuwait and I do a little bit of fun in Egypt while I'm there. Kuwait, Kuwait we had set up what is called a CJTF, combined joint task force Kuwait and that job of that combined joint task force Kuwait was in case Saddam decided to re-invade Kuwait. We would be spun up and we would repel and Saddam Hussein and then we bring forces in and we take out Saddam Hussein. So the [Inaudible] leaders had this huge plan, it's the 1008-98. That was the operational plan and it was a huge plan. Saddam Hussein attacks, we push Saddam, we defend Kuwait easily and then we attack in Kuwait. And, so basically the plan was, how do you invade Kuwait? How do you invade Iraq? And so from 98 to 2000, well for a good chunk of that time. I'm briefing this plan, to visiting generals, visiting people and say this is what we're going to do. If these, Saddam Hussein attacks Kuwait, this is how we're going to defeat Saddam Hussein and then essentially retake the country. And you know the plan it requires 500,000 troops, 400,000 troops, 500,000 troops and it's literally the timeline to go up to Baghdad is like D+ 260. So the day we attack into Iraq, we don't take Baghdad until, I don't know, eight months. Seven months later, it's a very slow, very deliberate process up through Iraq. We restore services as we attack north. We make sure everything is secure and it's a very slow process. So I know the plan. I get reassigned from there to be the S2, my final duty assignment as an intelligence officer with the 108 Air Defense Brigade. So I'm with 108 Air Defense Brigade and 9/11 happens. We spin up for the invasion of Iraq. We pretty much know it's coming. The people that were intelligent in the army kind of know what's going on. There are large numbers of people that really don't know what's going on from a military perspective. They really, really high levels. My brigade commander in 06, who
became a general at one point said no way are we going to attack. No way are we going to do anything with Iraq. I'm going like, Sir this is not, this is not rocket science. It's, it's pretty clear that we're going to invade. Anyways, and then but, so we're going to invade. Going to Kuwait I'm there before the invasion. I'm looking at the plan and the plan that is now being briefed by general, by general but yeah by general... fuck what's his name.

Audience Member: Swishcoff

John Crosby: No, Swishcoff was the first one. Guy with the nose, general. Crap, what's his name? 2001, 2002, 2003, 2003. General, what the fuck. Anyways the plans change, the plan is now less than 100,000 troops and we're going to take Baghdad and D+ 20. And so we're going to shoot, shoot through all of Iraq and essentially take Baghdad. Now this name is going to bother me because I worked, Franks. General Tommy Franks. Franks was my general at third army. I should have remembered his name because I briefed him as well. Anyways. So instead of having 500,000 troops, we have less than 100,000 troops and there's no, there's no post plan. What do we do after we take over the territory? We don't worry about that. So all this stuff is just completely change and you do get generals. General Zinni, the Marine centcom commander, who was essentially before Franks. Who said, this is wrong, we cannot do this job without the political support. Without a face for operation. General Shinseki, the Army Chief of Staff, said the exact same thing. General Shinseki gets fired, general Zinni had retired. So you have senior ranking military people saying this a flawed plan. In country I'm talking the marine general in charge of intelligence for the marine expeditionary way that they were attached to. He said, this is fucked up it's, it's going to, we're going to get bogged down in this long civil war. So people on the ground, we saw this happening but we just continue to follow orders. And that's part of the frustration with being in the military, is you're following orders. You don't really get to pick
and choose. Now if it's an unlawful order, you know, you can't kill people but if you're told to do something that's fucked up, if it's not illegal or it's not, if it's not, you just, alright this is really fucken stupid. But, you're going to be digging that hole until you're told to stop. And, so I'm looking at the military, people think about joining the military. I understand, you know, there's not a lot of options. When you're given an order you do things. You're deployed, you follow orders. Sometimes those orders are good, and sometimes those orders are really messed up. And sometimes you question where these order’s coming from. And you know, when I was younger, when I was younger I'd go, wow people that are older are smarter. I want to disabuse you of that notion. We're not smarter, I think we're actually stupider. You know, more brain cells have died. We've just live through too much, we're not smarter. Don't trust us. You know, you think we're going to do good. No, we're idiots. So you know, vote for Sanders for god sakes. Alright, so Fort living room, echo, tango, suitcase, retirement, ETS.
John Crosby: Anyways, so I'm looking at my service I did this [Inaudible]. Why did I join the Army? Why did I join the military? And I think part of it is, is this idea of duty, honor, and country because I am a patriot in the sense that I do believe in our country. I do believe in American values and what are American values? For country and actually that is the motto of the unit that I was attached to, I was assigned to in the national training center. So when I was in Fort Ord killing Americans, our unit crest was a polar bear. So we're in Death Valley, California, Fort Irwin and our unit crest is a polar bear. Don't ask me because our unit was the unit that invaded Russia. Part of the Russian occupation in 1919. So we got a polar bear out of that. So our unit crest is a polar bear but it, the line was Pro Patria. Pro Patria is for country. And so when we look at political identity, what is political identity? And this is my political science teacher lecture coming out of me. Is this nationalism, so you know, what is nationalism? Where does our political identity come from? You know, for, for good swath of 400 years of European history, a lot of it is blood. We have German blood, we have Japanese blood, we have French blood and that's the basis of nationalism occurs or it's our God. We all have the same God and that's, that's our tribal identity or nationalism. Or your culture. How you were raised, whether we eat our young. You know the roots of American ideology is this liberalism and by liberalism means we can, we are free to do what we want as long as we don't mess with anybody else. We're free to do as we want as long as we don't infringe upon the rights of others. And that's to me is, that's what it means to be an American. And this is what pisses me off about this whole thing about building a fence against Mexicans or not allowing Hindus or Muslims into America. You know, our motto is E Pluribus Unum. Out of many, one. Our nation is not based upon blood. It's not based upon god or singular culture. It's based upon the idea of liberalism, it's based upon the idea that we all believe that all men are created equal. That's what it means to be an American. And that's why I joined the military. To advance American values. Now, do we do that, very seldom because that's all kind of messed up but that's what I believe.
John Crosby: And when we look at the basis of liberalism, this is the Declaration of Independence. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed;”

US Declaration of Independence, July 4th 1776

John Crosby

Audience Member: No.

John Crosby: No. Or as an Azerbaijan. Or an Akhenaten. No, we are all men or women. We all had the same rights and we as Americans should advance those rights, those liberties. It pisses me off when we.
John Crosby: And, when we look at the Oath of Enlistment. I, do, solemnly swear, support and defend the Constitution the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God."

The Peace Institute at CSU, Chico

Thank You for Your Service
**John Crosby:** Preamble of the Constitution. We the people, of the United States. So, what is our government? I'm listening to somebody talk about our government. Well the government needs to fix. Those people need to fix it. What the f, what the F over. Who's the government? We are, we the people. This is our government, we don't have the government fix it. The government should fix it, we should fix. This is our responsibility. Who invaded Iraq? Well, I invaded Iraq but you all helped me. You are all enablers, so drink the Kool-Aid.
John Crosby: So, when we look at American values, understand who we are. Promote the general welfare, provide for the common defense. Secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity and that's everything. And.
John Crosby: This is the Code of Conduct to talk about this is like an, eye chart for those of you in the back. Read line 1 all that really matters is line 1. I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense. I’m prepared to give my life for American values but American values are universal. In the sense that liberty. And when I look at my service and I look at why I joined a lot of the reason why I joined was I do believe this. We need to guard our country and defend our way of life. And our way of life isn’t to destroy other people’s ways of life. It's to advance the ideas of liberty and tolerance. Tolerance. Oh, shit let’s go back. I can’t even go back. I probably need to do something else besides to go back. So, this is Mac. I hate Macs. I’m just kidding I don’t mind Mac. Once again, article 6. I will never forget that I am an American fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions and dedicated to the principles which made my country free.
Why enlist? Why serve?

- Each Veteran is different
  - Service
  - Training
  - Opportunity
  - Temperament
- Tribal
- Ultimately serve the ideals of the Nation
- We are a reflection of the people we serve
- Past, present, future

**John Crosby:** So, why enlist? Why did I serve? I kind of told you why I served but each veteran is different. Each veteran has their own reasons why they do these things. Some is because of service. We do want to give back to our country, we want to give back to our community, we want to get give back to our society and this idea of service. Some people do it because of the training. They want to get some sort of training out of it and that's perfectly fine. Some people see it as an opportunity because it is a meritocracy. If you are smart and you're motivated, you will get promoted. There is no doubt. I mean, you can get injured and then you’re kind of f*cked but if you don't get injured, which will happen. People, side story, I'm at NTC. I'm a sergeant and we're planning an attack, we're planning a defense and this lieutenant, he's attached to us. He's got a platoon with us and he's supposed to help us and he comes running up to me goes and I go, okay sir this is what we're doing. He goes, what? This is what we're doing sir. What! Sir! This is what we're doing! We’re going down this! And I go, why do I have to yell at you. He was at Ranger school, when an artillery simulator went off like 2 feet from his head. So he’s got 80% hearing loss, so he'll never hear again for the rest of his life and there just waiting for him to, you know leave medically discharged. That's horrible but that's the military. Or you can be at Ranger school and you jump out and it’s night drop. They really do night drops and instead of landing on the drop zone, you land in a tree and get your spinal, spinal cord broken. That's the military, so when you think about, what you're doing. Understand it's, you know, this is the crap shit. You're placing your life on the line. There's sometimes people aren't very confident. But it does give you the opportunity and some people have temperament. Their temperament is they, they can't follow orders. If you can't follow orders then don't join the military because they will tell you some pretty stupid stuff. Here peel these potatoes, here don't do this, here do these things. An example, my unit I'm, I'm the, I'm the four detachment OCOIC for my unit, my air defense unit. Oh god. Don't even get me start on this conversation, so there's five of us, there's warren officers, couple of
NCOs and we're getting everything squared away at this airbase. So my unit my entire brigade headquarters 150 guys, they come flying into Kuwait they land at the airport, Kuwait airport. They get off the airport, they put all the gear onto the bus and the bus goes to the airport that we're going to be stationed from. Well we show up and the Air Force security guard at this airbase says, oh your driver isn't on our list of approved people to come on the base. We just left an Air Force base, where he was an approved driver. All my soldiers are on this bus and so you're telling he can't drive the bus onto your base. That's exactly right because his name is not on the list. So we have to get everybody off the bus, all their gear. You know, walk it through the desert to our location because this Air Force major, who I was going to kill but my Col. told me not to. Said, this guy's name wasn’t on the list. So understand there’s all kind of stupid and stupid things will get people killed.

Defending Kuwait against, initially we had to have patria units, air defense units out front in case Saddam launched missiles or launched aircraft into Kuwait. And so we know we had no air defense for those board units. And so a unit came in from the states, they threw them forward and they put them in the middle of the desert. But because he was from a different unit the air defense unit in Kuwait wouldn't give him the codes. Wouldn't give him the proper codes for friend or foe. So we have an active air defense unit with live missiles, defending a ford base in Kuwait and they see an unknown aircraft coming. And because they don't have the proper codes, what does that air defense unit do? It shoots it and kills two British pilots. A British Tornado with a pilot and navigator both get taken out of the sky because this army Colonel wouldn't give this, this Commander the proper codes because he wanted to see them fuck up.

**Audience Member:** [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Yea, because if he was that, that one battalion commander reports to a
different brigade commander, so that death would be on another brigade commander. And so the great commander in the country he washes his hands a bit. Oh, I'm not responsible for that and so he can say this, and so when these two Colonels are competing for position, the one guy has a mark on his record because his battalion killed a friendly aircraft. Where this commander who was an, in country in Kuwait gets his hands, he washed. Oh, I don't. Not my job. When technically it was his job but because everything is all messed up when people are coming in country. Yeah, these guys, there's some ripe bastards out there. In the military and that, that just want to advance their career. That's the nature of the military, so you don't know what you're going to get. And you can have some commanders who will go to bat. Who will, who will literally go down and, and kick the crap out of people that are standing in the way. I had one Lieutenant Colonel who said, hey Lieutenant Crosby if somebody is giving you hard time getting equipment, getting stuff, tell me, I'll go down and I'll kick the shit out of him. And he would do it, Lieutenant Colonel Lugensky. Great guy and that's the good thing about the military. You will find people that will do the right thing, it's just finding those people. They happen to go outside or train to command. Finding who in that in, in the whole mess will actually work because there are selecting anybody else. It's like any other society. Just like you guys as students. You know, or in your life. There are some people who just don't fuckin’, we call them oxygen thieves. They don't work. They just don't do anything, you need to avoid them. And some people are actively trying to hurt you and those are the ones you really have to avoid. Stupid and industrious. The stupid and industrious, those are the ones you have to worry about. And, tribal. I mean, the military is a tribal organization. We bond, you know, we're in this together and so if you're looking for something to join the military is a good thing from that perspective because you do get a sense of camaraderie. You do get a good sense of, I'm watching your back and they will watch your back. I mean, the people that you work will do anything for you. If you're good, if you're a good, if you're a good person and you're
relatively intelligent, you will attract people that are good and are relatively intelligent. And you'll bond and it will become a really good experience except understand that there are pockets out there that are really messed up. You know, ultimately the military service ideals of the nation and I think our nation is extremely important. I think the ideals of our nation are extremely important. We are, as linked in the paraphrase linking because I can't remember his quote. We are an experiment, we are an experiment whether this nation or any other nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. If we can't come together as Americans, if we can't come together, overlook our tribal differences in the sense of religion or color or race or ethnicity or sexual orientation if we can't overlook these things and we like an idiot like Trump or Cruz. Then we have failed, we have failed this experiment. And, so we are
John Crosby: a reflection of the people that we serve past, present and future. And, I look at it from an Army perspective this quote, “You may fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it and wipe clean of life—but if you desire to defend it, protect it and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman legions did, by putting your young men in the mud.” — T.R. Fehrenbach

- Infantryman
  - “Close with and destroy the enemy”
  - “Once force has been invoked the only effective reply is superior force.” Gwynne Dyer

John Crosby: a reflection of the people that we serve past, present and future. And, I look at it from an Army perspective this quote, “You may fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it and wipe clean of life—but if you desire to defend it, protect it and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman legions did, by putting your young men in the mud. You have to occupy the train. You can't drone it, you can't reduce it to rubble, that isn't saving. That isn't protecting, that's not defending for civilization. You have to do this on the ground. Are we willing to do this, most Americans, a lot of Americans say no, they are unwilling to do that, which is fine, which is another concept of liberty but let's not close our borders. Let's not close our minds to what we are as Americans. And of course, as an infantryman, our job is to close with and destroy the enemy.
John Crosby: Somalia, Iraq, Bosnia, Rwanda, I talked about that. I talked about General Shinseki and General Zinni. And I like to talk really quick about the Dixie Chicks. Why the fuck the Dixie Chicks? We’re spitting up to go to Iraq and I'm looking at this going, this is fucked up. We don't have a conversation, we're not having a conversation about why we’re going into Iraq. This, the only people that seemed to be talking about, at least, were the Dixie Chicks. We shouldn't go and this is wrong. I mean there are other people but from a military perspective, I'm looking at American civilians, you are all civilians and the only person that I actually saw was like Dixie Chicks pushing back against this idea, we need to go invade Iraq. Not, whether we go invade Iraq or not, as an army officer I'm just following orders. It would be nice to have a conversation. We should have a conversation before we do these things. I think the Dixie Chicks were a perfect example of that.
John Crosby: And I like this quote from an American perspective. You know, this is obviously, who wrote this? William Shakespeare, 1600. This is King Henry V. But I understand this is nationalism. This is the idea that, that the military were a band of brothers and we are a band of brothers. It's not, you know, shed blood with me, shall be my brother. This is the idea that royalty, this idea of aristocracy is no longer useful. Blood doesn't matter, blood in the sense of English blood or aristocracy doesn't matter. It's how you think, how you believe, how you, are you willing to defend what you believe in. That's my brother. Nothing about race, nothing about creed, just about action.
John Crosby: And, so when you look at advancing liberal values globally. You can do this a lot of different ways. Peace Corps, non-government organizations that deal with human rights. Advancing democracy, you don’t have to join the army and be in the work corps, you can be in the Peace Corps. Teaching abroad, understanding other cultures. These are all ways, that we can become more connected and no longer isolated. And that would be advancing liberal values.
John Crosby: and even taking Tom's class, every once in a while about philosophy. Locally, you know, clubs and organizations. Isaac is a prime example of that. He was a Marine, gets out, invades Iraq, gets out, and is serving his community, in a very positive way. He may not think that, he thinks he’s like doing this, you know, I’m doing here and there but you are. You’re advancing that we are all brothers. That we’re all equal and that’s a very important thing. And these are things that we can do with service locally. Volunteer, emergency responders, police, fire, medical. Taking responsibilities for your actions, active citizenship, be informed, think critically, understand the other side. Understand why the other person thinks that way. Don’t just automatically say, oh you’re an idiot. Understand, why, where he’s coming from or she.
**John Crosby:** I think it's only the last slide. Obviously, there's issues, PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicides, 22 a day, the VA, 22 veterans comment suicide each day. Why is that? A whole bunch of different reasons. Why do you join the military? What, why would I join the military? I'm an active person I, I want, I want to engage things. If I get injured or I get hurt, I suffer from depression. I'm much more likely to be taken active role in ending that. An active role in ending that, is what? Killing myself. So when we look at veteran's suicides there's a lot of reasons why there's a lot of veteran suicides but it is an issue. And the VA, the veteran's administration, there's a lot of vets out there. World War II vets, Korean World vets, Vietnam vets. We seen conflict 6,000 killed, 60,000 wounded. G.I. Bill is a great thing. I had the G.I. Bill, so if you're looking at from a military, if you're looking at joining the military, the G.I. bill has actually got me this degree. Got me this teaching position for all intents and purposes. So there's good things about the military, it is just understand the downsides of it. Like getting killed or wounded or suffer from PTSD or TBI or getting the G.I. Bill. Alright, I think I rambled on enough. That was it. So does anyone have any questions? Is anybody awake? Go ahead. Yes, sir.

**Audience Member:** So almost 35 years ago I was an art major here in Chico State [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Right.

**Audience Member:** [inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Right.

**Audience Member:** [inaudible]
John Crosby: Right.

Audience Member: [inaudible]

John Crosby: Right.

Audience Member: So, when I see those [inaudible]

John Crosby: Right.

Audience Member: [inaudible]

John Crosby: Right.

Audience Member: So, how do you [inaudible]

John Crosby: I don't think, I mean from a history stand point because I teach American foreign policy as well. And I see, you know, college students coming to my class and they have no, no real, no real clear understanding of US history. They don't understand that we were right bastards all along on the line. We were right bastards to the Indians. We were right bastards to the Mexicans, we were right bastards to the Spaniards, we were right bastards to the Hawaiians, and we were just right bastards. Understand that's how the world works, from a realist perspective. This, it's a doggy, dog environment and we're trying to just take tiny little bits of progress. And it's hundreds of years and so there's a lot of evil and a lot of nastiness in human behavior but there's also good in human behavioral. We're both social and competitive and, and I think if, if, if we were clear to our students that, you
know, as we’re human animals and we’re both social and competitive. We can be very vicious to each other, we can also be very friendly with each other. So, any kind of human endeavor that we undertake, it could be teaching. I know my, my, my, my brother and my sister-in-law both teach in L.A. Unified and you know and they have some teachers they just want to kill because they’re idiots. So, any human...

**Audience Member:** God administrators.

**John Crosby:** Oh, god. Oh, yeah. The administrators would actually be the ones that they would be slow painful death to the administrator. The, the fellow teachers they just shoot out right but the administrators long, painful, enduring deaths of lots of acid. And, so we don't, we try and I think we try to sugarcoat history and the human experience to our children. Because, oh my god, they can't listen to this. I mean, 15, the world is fucked. This is what's going to happen. This is, this is the future. And so we need to be clear as to the consequences and one of those is if you join the military this could be you. But, I think we like to, we like to put our children in these little cocoons and these bubbles and make them safe. When the world isn't necessarily a safe place. There are horrible things out there that happened and we, we, we talk about the Holocaust maybe in class but I don't know if we, I don't know if you can get to a 15 or 16-year-old about the death of human depravity. And to the reaches of the beauty of the Declaration of Independence and what Jefferson was trying to reach at. Where we are social and we can give each other a better life if we come together and we trust in each other and that's where liberalism. We have to trust in each other. E pluribus, even if or even if, some of us will get eaten. The leopard will eat some of us but as a body as a civic body, as a civic society, we can advance. It may be sputtering, it may be shortsighted but I have to believe as a progressive that we can advance slowly down that dark tunnel and not die. But, I could be wrong. Does that answer your question?
John Crosby: In parts, I mean I don’t know, I just talk to your students and say, this the military. What is the job of an infantryman? The job of the army, kill people and break things. That’s the job, that's the job description. Do you want to kill people and break things? If they say yes, sign here. Free white 21. Go ahead.

John Crosby: Best thing that I was employed once. I'm not sure where. Being off an airplane, we were overseas, landed in the United States and getting off the plane and the stewardess said, welcome home. And I think if somebody says they have served overseas in combat or served overseas the best thing to say to a veteran is welcome home and mean it. You know this is our home and we need to make it as best as possible and, and I got glossed over the quote by Dryer. Once force has been invoked, the only effective reply is a superior force. We are competitive creatures and the military is that, you know once, if somebody pokes me, and I don't want to be poked. I want to be on the stubby end of that spear. So, I think there’s a need for military. I think we just use it, I think we use it judiciously or un-judiciously, whatever that word is. I’m not exactly sure. But I would say, welcome home. I served, blah, blah, blah, welcome home. And I thinks it's better than, thank you for your service. Although, that's fine too but it just seems like, there's just things with thank you for, like I’m doing you a favor. We’re all in this together. Just not me, we’re all in this together. Yes.

Audience Member: [inaudible]
John Crosby: I think young people want us, want to serve. I think there's a good number of people that really want to do good. They want to, they want to do something of value to work with their community or their world. And I think that we need to provide a clear opportunity for them to do that. And I think study abroad or teaching abroad or Peace Corps or working with an NGO that works abroad. Instead of just, you know, when you say, helping my skills. My skills to help myself that's very selfish and very self-centered. When we should be looking at, especially for, not all young people and I wouldn't say the majority but there are certain number of young people that are somewhat attracted to military service. They want to do good, they want to do something and the military is a very clear path to do something and we don't, we don't see those other paths of service that that are there. We just don't, we're not giving them an opportunity. So we don't know how we can serve.

Audience Member: I have one other question for you. And, that is, [inaudible]

John Crosby: I had the luxury or the misfortune to join the military at the age of 24. So I already knew who I was. I already knew... what?

Audience Member: So, your first push-up.

John Crosby: Yeah, I mean I was like, my push-up was weak. I was like 27, I did girlie push-ups. Anyways, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. I already had a degree of cynicism going in. I already knew it was a game. They're just playing a game with me. And I just kind of see life but I mean that's my temperament. I see life as kind of a game, I mean some people don't see it as a game. I just see it as something that, you know, we just eventually we know, we do what we can. Have a little bit of fun then we get hit by a bus. And so I don't
take a lot of things, I may take certain things very seriously but a good chunk of it I really don't take all that seriously. I just let it, you know okay, that's just the way it is. So I mean I'm inherently cynical I think to a certain degree but that's my temperament. I can't replicate. I know other people don't feel the same way. That's just how I feel. That's why I'm saying every veteran is different because we're all different and I just came to military service with, I knew it was kind of messed up going in. I mean, really. Okay, my older brother was a Vietnam vet, who deserted from OCS. Lived in our basement for like a month. My mom turned him in. He spent a month in stockade, volunteered for Vietnam, lots of good experience there. Came back, got out of the service. My dad was in the Navy during World War I. He served, he was an escort so, he served just escorting ships against, you know, transporting. Attack in Germany from 42 to 44, came back to the Pacific and then started with the Japanese and he'd have horrible stories about the landing in Okinawa. Marines coming back just shattered and destroyed. Both my grandfathers, one was Marine in World War I and the other was an Army soldier World War I who lost a lung, mustard gas they put them on the dead pile and then somebody saw them twitching and they pulled them off the dead pile. So he didn't have a lung. So I mean you know, I knew these stories growing up so I kind of know this is how the world is. It's just have as much, kind of enjoy yourself as you know, take a little bit seriously, but I think that's my temperament so.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** My NGOs that I consider to be my personal favorite? You know, I don't have any right now but when I was in the Army. And once again this goes back to my cynicism I used to donate to Planned Parenthood population. So a good chunk of my money, my donation money went to Planned Parenthood population. Why Planned Parenthood
Issues

- PTSD
- Suicides (22 a day)
- VA
  - WWII, Korea and Vietnam
  - Medical
  - Recent conflicts nearly 6,000 killed
  - 60,000 wounded
- GI Bill

population? I think the fewer number of people on the plan is a good thing and I think that if you educate women about their reproductive rights they will no longer have kids, they would become part of the workforce and they become more productive members of society. Once they become more productive members of society they start getting little income, they start demanding rights. And I think women rights as a global issue is extremely important because once women demand rights than the men can no longer treat them as property. So you'll no longer see women, globally we no longer see women as property and that essentially will start this catalyst movement where we all start seeing each other as equals. And that's why I think Planned Parenthood population was a vehicle by which you could accomplish a lot of different ends. And the cynical part of me was well they're not having kids that's one less bullet I have to put down range when they are climbing over the wire. Somebody get that point? Yeah so that would be Planned Parenthood population. But I think that women's, I think anything to deal with advancing women's issues is that should be at our forefront because it moves the idea that men can treat their fellow humans, women as property. And once you break that idea that people are property then we can get the idea that all people are equal. And once you get the idea that all people are equal and have equal rights, life, liberty, and property, that advances liberal values on a global level. We are not there yet obviously but I'd like to see us getting closer in your lifetime. I'll be dead relatively soon.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: That's soon. I mean from a political perspective that's soon. Generationally things only generationally have changed. So I'll be dead way before you see any, you'll see some of these but yeah we're toast. Minus well get a nice bottle of Jameson and call it a day.
John Crosby: I am deaf on independent contractors. I don't think we should have independent contractors. I know they serve us, Blackwater didn't have independent contractors. But we had, we had food service that was all, they put these used palatial tents in middle of a desert and they had really nice meals. But it was all food service, it was all essentially paid by American taxpayers. It essentially hired local Kuwaiti, [inaudible], so then hired Pakistanis to come in and then service food in the middle of the desert. And that was local, that was contracting, private contractors. Or the Blackwater people that supported you know the Second Department of the State. To me all of those should be military personnel that are under the uniform code of military justice that should follow the rule of law. Because if one of my soldiers kills a civilian, I can punish them. I know that there's issues with that as well because people cover that stuff up. But at least there is an avenue for that. When you have private contractors god knows there's all the accountability goes out the window. I think we should have no independent military contractors. I think it all should be, we should pay the people that do technical stuff better in the military, people that do those kind of services. But it also should be handled on the US, the official rules of the military, Uniform Code of Military Justice at least under the same set of rules and same sort of regulations instead of this hodgepodge that we end up with invading Iraq. And I think part of that problem is the politicization of the military because a lot of that is we did that not because efficiencies, we did that so some sort of contractor could then do kickbacks to the political representatives of congressmen, or the senator. And they could get immediate funding. So I'm deaf on contractors. But there are a lot of contractors, I have a saying when I was in fifth corps, you couldn't swing a dead cat without hitting a contractor. I don't like, because they don't, it's hard to not a get a soldier to work on combat but you got a contractor "Fuck this shit" you can walk off. If somebody walked off on me in combat I'd
shoot them, you can't do that to a contractor. But yeah I want to shoot people so no I don't like contractors.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Yeah yeah. I don't think anything. I mean once you understand it's a game and then all they're trying to do is just break you. And as long as you're just "Yes sir, no sir", as long as you just play the game you're fine. I mean I learned a little bit of that just enlisted in NCO. But I kind of already knew that kind of going in, I mean kind of beat out my independence streak a little bit being enlisted in NCO so when I did go to Officer Candidate School I was flippan. Much less flippan than I am now but yeah. But it's a game. As long as you understand as a game then just try to weed out the people that either physically can't do it or mentally incompetent. And if you're physically competent and mentally competent you can fog a mirror and you can run 2 miles in less than 16 minutes you are good to go. This is all for the school. I mean it's not hard, I mean just standing, I remember Fort Benning you have your 3 x 5 index card and you spent hours with the 3 x 5 index card in front of you just standing there. It's just a game, they are just trying to fuck with you.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** I don't think it's the whole point, I think they're just incompetent.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Right, yes. To be typically fair the marines are much better at training officers. Marine officers is infinitely, is not infinitely, but much smarter than an Army officer. Army
officers are, the Marines are nuts don't get me wrong, but they're intelligent, there officers are. Army officers they're [Inaudible], army officers you know you can have some slugs. My fellow major in chemical major, a chemical corps. This is the spin up to Iraq. We’re going to invade Iraq, Saddam Hussein, I believe Saddam Hussein had chemical weapons. He didn’t have nuclear weapons that's just bullshit but he had chemical weapons and he was probably [Inaudible] with chemicals. He's the officer in charge of the chemical part of our defense and he needs to go to Kuwait, and he needs to go to Iraq when we attack. And he's at this staff meeting when we were in [Inaudible] he volunteers to be the rear attachment commander. He wants to stay back in the rear. Fucking coward. I mean he looked good on paper, you know he went to Norwich, big strong strapping guy you know, shrugged jawline, really smart, fucking coward, sack of shit. But [Inaudible] commands that you will come to Iraq, you will come to Kuwait, and then when we jump forward to Iraq he sent his NCO into Iraq because he was to fucking gutless to come into Iraq. So yeah there main army officers are this whole gamut of just, you can have really good ones and you can have some that are just pieces of junk. Marines mostly are good. I mean I trust Marine officer in a heartbeat over an army officer but that's. I hoped that answered your question.

Okay yes mam.

**Audience Member: [Inaudible]**

**John Crosby:** I can't speak for other people. I know what primarily motivated me. And I know that talking to soldiers, a lot of them do feel some degree of service aspect of it. And I think a lot of human behavior is not just pure one thing or the other, there's a whole bunch of mixture. There is opportunism, there is advancement, there's service for your country, there's all kinds of different reasons why we do anything. I think service is one of
them. And I agree with you fully but I do realize that, and I am of a realist dent that we do have to have people that are that whole line from a few good men with Jack Nicholson. You need that guy on the law to defend us because I do believe we are competitive and people will steal our lunch money if given the chance. And so we have to have people that are willing to sacrifice themselves, to stand on that wall, to pull those shifts in the middle of the night. And that goes for emergency operators, that goes for EMTs, that goes for doctors, that goes to the people that work those really hard fucking shifts that nobody wants to work. Those are all kinds of service.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: No.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: Yeah see that's, there are some people, there's some financiers that I don't think we need. There are people that I don't think we need. I think people that are willing to do the hard jobs and they could be any kind of hard jobs, those are the ones we should thank for their service. For the reason that they're willing to do those hard jobs because we do have to have those people that are willing to do that. And so yeah I would say that there are a good number of those people you shouldn't thank for you service because they are not doing it for the right reasons. But going back to thank you for your service and yours I think there are enough of us that are willing to do those hard dirty thankless jobs that should be thanked for. Yeah I don't think every job is the same, I'm not an occupational levelist. Some jobs are higher esteem than others. Any other questions?
Issues

- PTSD
- Suicides (22 a day)
- VA
  - WWII, Korea and Vietnam
  - Medical
  - Recent conflicts nearly 6,000 killed
  - 60,000 wounded
- GI Bill

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: [Inaudible] I always.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: Go ahead.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: Oh yeah you can't talk. While you are serving in the military you can't speak. Well I think that's a problem growing. I know when I was in fifth corps and when Bill Clinton was president there were a lot of Republican officers, and that's why I think this is a serious problem in the military. The military is attracting more conservative bent because we have an all-volunteer force. And so liberals "Oh god we can't send our perfect children to war. They don't send their perfect children to war". So a bunch of conservatives they're god, and country, and a lot of emphasis on God. They send their kids in the military, you get officers who really spoke very poorly of Quentin and I'm sure if I stayed in service, there's a huge, I'm sure, I'll bet my entire whatever I make a year which is both insignificant but I'd bet all that on that there's a huge anti-Obama presence in the US military. Would dearly love to get him out of office in almost by any means necessary because it's just that I think we've dangerously, don't get me started on militant industrial complex, we've dangerously put too much money into the military and we're tracking the wrong, we're attracting not the wrong, we're attracting just one side of the equation. And we need to get more liberals, more democrats, in the military to balance out that equation. But I don't think that's, I don't think we are moving that direction but not, in the canary in the coal mine, I think we
should put more people. I think we should reduce our military anyways, we should cut the budget to like 200 billion. Why should we, we need a really significantly lower the military expenditures, but don’t get me started on that.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Yeah but I think there are, right I do. I think there’s a large number that do get attracted to it. But I think there’s also another number that do go from a liberal military service kind of perspective. I think the problem is if you don’t have a balance or at least a significant number of those, I mean it could 80/20 but if you get too few of the 20% then you’re going to have serious problems. Because the palm of the military is you don’t know what the other guy is going to do. So from a cool perspective, I don't know general so-and-so is on my side are not, then you’re more of, you’re not going to do that. But if you know your entire military, a good chunk of it is one way then you have serious problems. And I think we're moving in that direction maybe 20, 30, 40 years from now we may have an imperial moment like the Romans did in 80 A.D, or 80 B.C but I don't think we are there yet but we are moving in that direction. And we need to be very serious about how much money were putting in the military and who we're attracting as officers and enlisted.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Right. Yeah the general, the Marine Corps general in 1930 seem. Yeah.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** I see it much more prevalent now than the 1930s. I know when he was
talking he was talking about supporting Banana Republic’s in Latin America.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: But I'm a liberal enough. I think war for most businessmen, McKinley as a businessman before the Spanish-American. He didn't want war, I mean he was totally against war and he was a businessman he was a capitalist. I think most business people don’t want war.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: There you go back to financiers. Instead of lawyers those are the people I would line up with the revolution. So there are certain occupations I think need to be more regulated. I think bankers need to be more regulated but that's just my personal opinion.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

John Crosby: Yeah there’s serious issues with our campaign finance reformer as well. But that's, you know I can't speak to that. I have to think that the, once again it's back to social and competitive. There's, we are moving slowly forward, there may be problems but I think we are moving slowly forward. I think we should be very careful on how we do that and I'd like to see more liberals in the military. I'd like to see more liberals that look at the military as a way of checking military industrial complex. And I like to see a more informed conversation about the role of the military in the United States society because I don't think we have an informed conversation. I think, I don't think we talk about it, I think part of the reason is because everybody benefits from it. I mean a lot of people benefit from the
military industrial complex, not just financiers and bankers but I think workers that work at factories, unions benefit, I think there is a large segment of the population. A lot of money comes from the DOD to universities for research facilities. And so there's a lot of blood on everybody's hands and a lot of us are complicit in that.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** I'll never get [Inaudible]

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** Nothing.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]

**John Crosby:** I can see that as well but I'm talking about globally I think human rights are better than it was 20 years ago globally. Human rights are better than it was 40 years ago. I think women's rights are advancing incrementally better than it was 60 years ago. So I think human rights as an idea that people are equal as an idea is advancing slowly generationally across the globe. And I think that's where the progress is and that's where we least keep our eye on. And hopefully avoid the fascism American state and not elect Trump 2016, or Cruz, or Rubio, or Bush, hell I'll even say Kasich although I might vote for Ryan but go ahead but he dropped out.

**Audience Member:** [Inaudible]
John Crosby: Oh god you don't care. Yeah if you're a soldier in Iraq, I mean you don't, the culture. You don't want to know really. I mean if I'm a soldier I don't want to see, I mean at basic level basic soldiers I don't want to see the enemy as a person. Because once I, if I have to kill him or her that's much harder. I much rather see them as an object or just something that is a pop up target. Because once I see that as an individual, I had a marine that took my American foreign policy class and participated in the invasion of Iraq. And somebody was firing an AK-47's at his tank and so he just moved his coax machine-gun and zip the line. And they go to the tank up there and they were a couple of 14-year-old kids you know, I mean they were just popping an AK-47 at their tank. And you know he killed two 14-year-old kids. So once you see that you can't unsee that. If you can make that person less than, not a human there are a rag head, they're a camel jockey whatever you want, that helps you psychologically helps you from psychological sense. Helps you get a distance. But if you see that 14-year-old kid as your little brother, aw man you're all kinds of fucked up from a PTSD perspective. That's just, you can't undo that. So I think we do these, we don't want to know about the culture because we want to keep a distance.

Audience Member: That's a great point John to end this presentation on. Do you have one more question?

Audience Member: I do. [Inaudible]

John Crosby: Yeah I think a draft has, first of all any kind of draft has to be unbiased. My personal favorite draft would be, if you go to one of the top 50 universities in the United States, private universities you have a 25% chance of getting drafted in the military when you graduate. So those Harvard and Yale folkies they get thrown in the military. But I think that there is truth that, I think we see, I think that's, and I would argue that part of the
reason why we had the civil rights movement was the Truman's integration of the Army in 1948 and 1949. He brings all these black and white units together and a bunch of people are drafted and so they see each other as human beings. And so that gives the impudence for those crackers in the South to say no I knew a black guy in my army unit and he wasn't a bad guy so they should get rights. So I think part of that, I think that societal bonding happens with the draft. I also think that the idea that people see the military and say, they get a clear understanding that some of these people are fucked up and we shouldn't be automatically genuflecting to the Army or the military like we do. I think that's a very bad precedent that we uncritically think of the military as this great thing when actually it's like any other human institution deeply flawed and runned by sometimes really messed up people.

[Applause from Audience]