



Alfred W. McCoy
J.R.W. Smail Professor of History

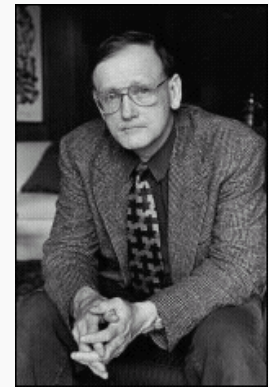
Email: awmccoy@wisc.edu
Phone: (608)263-1855
Office: 5131 Mosse Humanities
Mailbox: 5026 Mosse Humanities

Curriculum Vitae: [View PDF](#)

Office Hours: Thursdays 12:00 - 2:00 or by appointment

Education: PhD: Yale; MA: University of California-Berkeley; BA: Columbia College

Bio Sketch:



After earning a Ph.D. in Southeast Asian history at Yale, my writing on this region has focused on two topics — Philippine political history and global opium trafficking. My first book, *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1972), sparked controversy when the CIA tried to block publication. But after three English editions and translation into nine foreign languages, this study is now regarded as the “classic” work on the global drug traffic.

My more recent work on covert operations, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York, 2006), explores agency's half-century history of psychological torture. A film based in part on that book, “Taxi to the Darkside,” won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature in 2008. My latest study of this topic, *Torture and Impunity* (Madison, 2012), explores the political and cultural dynamics of America's post 9/11 debate over interrogation.

The Philippines remains the major focus of my research. An investigation of President Marcos's “fake medals,” published on page one of the *New York Times* (January 23, 1986) just weeks before the country's presidential elections, contributed to the country's transition from authoritarian rule. Analyzing the many coup attempts that followed, my book *Closer Than Brothers* (New Haven, 1999) documents the corrosive impact of torture upon the Philippine military.

Three of my edited volumes on Philippine historiography have won that country's National Book Award. In 2001, the Association for Asian Studies awarded me the Goodman Prize for a “deep and enduring impact on Philippine historical studies.”

My recent book, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, 2009), draws together these two strands in my research -- covert operations and modern Philippine history -- to explore the transformative power of police, information, and scandal in shaping both the modern Philippine state and the U.S. internal security apparatus. In 2011, the Association for Asian Studies awarded *Policing America's Empire* the George McT. Kahin Prize, describing the work as “a passionate, elegantly written book that owes its mastery to McCoy's narrative and analytical gifts, his years of painstaking research and his sure sense of the ominous global implications of his story.”

In 2012, the Yale Graduate School Alumni Association awarded me the Wilbur Cross Medal which is presented annually to “a small number of outstanding alumni” to recognize “distinguished achievements in scholarship, teaching, academic administration, and public service.” Simultaneously, the University of Wisconsin-Madison gave me the Hilldale Award for Arts & Humanities for 2012. My current work explores the role of the “covert netherworld”—an invisible social interstice inhabited by criminal syndicates and secret services—in shaping the politics of modern states and their world order.

Research Interests:

Modern Philippine social and political history; U.S. foreign policy; colonial empires in Southeast Asia; global illicit drug trafficking; and CIA covert operations.

Selected Publications:

- “Torture and Impunity: The U.S. Doctrine of Coercive Interrogation” (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 298 pp.

- ed. (with Josep Fradera and Stephen Jacobson), "Endless Empire: Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline" (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 440 pp.
- "Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State" (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 659 pp.
- ed. (with Francisco Scarano), "Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State" (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 685 pp.
- ed., "An Anarchy of Families: Filipino Elites and the Philippine State" (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 451 pp.
- "A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, From the Cold War to the War on Terror" (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 288 pp.
- "The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Traffic" (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, revised, 2003), 709 pp.
- "Closer Than Brothers: Manhood at the Philippine Military Academy" (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 425 pp.

Awards:

- Yale Graduate School Alumni Association, Wilbur Cross Medal, 2012.
- University of Wisconsin, Hilldale Award for Arts & Humanities, 2012
- Association for Asian Studies, George Kahin Prize, 2011.
- University of Wisconsin Graduate School, J.R.W. Smail Chair in History, 2004.
- Philippine National Book Award, 1985, 1995, 2001.
- Association for Asian Studies, Grant Goodman Prize, 2001.
- Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad, 1998-99.

Courses Taught:

Lecture Courses:

- History 319 - The Vietnam Wars - [Syllabus 2012 \(pdf\)](#)
- History 458 - Southeast Asia Since 1800 - [Syllabus 2014 \(pdf\)](#)

Undergraduate Seminars:

- History 600 - Advanced Seminar in History - Topics: "Empire & Revolution: U.S. and European Empires in Southeast Asia" - [Syllabus 2011 \(pdf\)](#); "World War II in the Pacific"; "CIA Covert Warfare and Conduct of US Foreign Policy" - [Syllabus 2014 \(pdf\)](#); "U.S. and European Colonialism in Southeast Asia" [Syllabus 2013 \(pdf\)](#)

Graduate Courses:

- History 755 - Pro-seminar in Southeast Asian History - Topics: "Empire & Revolution: U.S. and European Empires in Southeast Asia" [Syllabus 2012 \(pdf\)](#); "World War II in the Pacific" - [Syllabus 2007 \(pdf\)](#); "CIA Covert Warfare and Conduct of US Foreign Policy" - [Syllabus 2014 \(pdf\)](#); "Reality of Images--Environmental Photography in Southeast Asia"; "Islands of Southeast Asia--The Practice of Comparative History"; "Tropical Dictators--Authoritarianism in Indonesia & the Philippines"; "U.S. and European Colonialism in Southeast Asia" [Syllabus 2013 \(pdf\)](#)

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