In the 20th century, the American military incorporated the use of crafts in two major service areas: beginning with WWI as a tool for rehabilitating wounded soldiers and veterans through occupational therapy and vocational training; and since WWII as a leisure and recreational activity promoting a sense of well being and efficacy. Arts and crafts making and other forms of creative expression have also helped veterans of war and combat following separation from service. This presentation briefly documents such creative initiatives as the WWII era Red Cross Arts and Skills program, crafts and writing projects for Vietnam veterans, and the myriad forms of arts and crafts making for both healing and well being developed by today's Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, including the Combat Paper Project.

Tara Leigh Tappert, Ph.D.

Tappert’s current scholarship focuses on 20th-century American craft, with recent work on arts and crafts and the military funded in 2010 by a research grant from the Center for Craft, Creativity, and Design. Since 1990, she has been a team member for the exhibition series documenting the history of 20th-century American craft sponsored by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City. Tara holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the George Washington University.

March 13, 2012, 1 p.m., Holroyd Hall, Room 390

Co-sponsored and funded by The Concert and Lecture Series, Connelly Library, and the Fine Arts Department