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### The 2023 Society for Military History Annual Meeting

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## The 2023 Society for Military History Annual Meeting

I recently attended the 2023 SMH Annual Meeting in San Diego California from March 24-26, 2023. There, I had the privilege of presenting a paper entitled, “A Soldier Can Owe Allegiance to but One Flag: Political Polarization and Military Service in Puerto Rico, 1920-1930s.” This paper examined political partisanship and its manifestations amongst servicemembers in Puerto Rico from World War I through the Nationalist uprisings of the 1930s. Using an array of archival and newspaper sources from the island and mainland, I argued that U.S. officials’ efforts to depoliticize the island’s security forces failed to radically change Puerto Rican political culture. Instead, Puerto Ricans’ positive view of the military and respect for those in uniform provided soldiers access to public forums and lent weight to their oft-expressed political opinions. Thus, rather than pacifying the colony and cementing its relationship with the United States, military service only amplified the struggle between partisans of statehood and independence.

The Society for Military History is the preeminent professional organization for military historians in the United States. I chose to present in this forum in order to workshop an article manuscript that I hope to submit to the *Journal of Military History* (which is published by the SMH), later this year. While in San Diego, I also attended a variety of panels and roundtables, focused on counterinsurgency, anti-colonial military struggles, and asymmetrical warfare. Information and sources gleaned from these presentations will inform my teaching at Lincoln University as well as my research agenda.