Abstract: This talk by Dr. Scott Mobley offers important insights on how people, organizations, and societies respond to—and are shaped by—rapid technological change. Drawing upon the research embodied in his award-winning book *Progressives in Navy Blue: Maritime Strategy, American Empire, and the Transformation of the U.S. Naval Identity, 1873-1898*, Mobley will examine how technology and strategy intersected to transform U.S. Navy professional culture during the final decades of the nineteenth century.

Captivated by exciting new developments in warship design, propulsion, and weaponry, some naval leaders embraced “Mechanism” (engineering solutions) as their vision for moving the Navy forward into the next century. Other leaders challenged this vision, touting “Strategy” (a holistic practice connecting means to ends) as the Navy’s best path to the future. Conflict resulted, and the tensions between Strategists and Mechanists ultimately forged the dichotomous “Warrior-Engineer” identity of modern naval professionals, while at the same time radically upgrading the Navy’s technology and reconceiving the nation’s strategic foundations.

Biography: Scott Mobley explores the political, technological, and cultural influences that shape America’s past and present. He earned a Ph.D. in History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Scott especially enjoys teaching, researching, and writing about U.S. naval and diplomatic history. Reviewers have acclaimed his book, *Progressives in Navy Blue: Maritime Strategy, American Empire, and the Transformation of the U.S. Naval Identity, 1873-1898* (Naval Institute Press, 2018). The volume offers fresh interpretations on American empire-building; early strategic practice in the U.S. Navy; and how technology, strategy, and national policy transformed the naval profession at the end of the nineteenth century. Earlier this year, *Progressives in Navy Blue* received a John Lyman Book Award (Honorable Mention) from the North American Society for Oceanic History. As a career U.S. Navy surface warfare officer and nuclear propulsion engineer, Scott commanded USS BOONE (FFG-28) and USS CAMDEN (AOE-2), and served as Reactor Officer in USS HARRY S TRUMAN (CVN-76). While under his command, CAMDEN participated in the opening assault phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Scott currently serves as the Associate Director for the Center for the Study of Liberal Democracy (CSLD) the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Before joining the CSLD team he taught at the U.S. Naval Academy as the Class of 1957 Post-doctoral Fellow in Naval Heritage. Scott also serves on the U.S. Naval Institute Naval History Advisory Board and co-edits Voices & Visions, an online resource that illuminates the history of U.S. foreign relations with primary audio-visual sources (http://vandvreader.org/).