

FILM 406: WAR IN FILM AND MEDIA

Spring 2017

INSTRUCTOR

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Studies

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will serve as both an overview of the war film/media genre—its particular conventions, meanings, and cultural significations—and a wide-ranging investigation into the intersections of war, the military, globalization, and perceptual and imaging technologies. The course will explore how particular wars of the last century have been represented in (predominantly American) film and media, while also discussing various technological and cultural overlaps between the military and the media industries. We will examine issues such as propaganda, race and gender in war, military and media technology, television coverage of war, war video games, and military representation in science fiction.

TEXTBOOKS

- **Hollywood and War: The Film Reader*, edited by J. David Slocum (Routledge, 2006)—abbreviated **H&W** in Course Schedule
- **War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*, by Paul Virilio (any edition is fine)
- *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation*, by Tom Engelhardt (2007 revised edition is preferred, but any is fine)
- *Ugly War, Pretty Package: How CNN and Fox News Made the Invasion of Iraq High Concept* (Indiana University Press, 2009)—also available as an e-book through the Emory library website
- *Playing War: Military Video Games after 9/11*, by Matthew Thomas Payne (NYU Press, 2016)

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Class Attendance and Participation (worth 15% of final grade)

Attendance and participation in class and screenings are crucial for the functioning of our small seminar. You are expected to read and think carefully about the assigned texts before class, so you can fully engage in class discussions. More than three absences from class and/or screening will count against your grade. No

distinctions are made between excused or unexcused absences. (Exceptions: religious holidays that I am notified of in advance; in the instance I am contacted by a dean on your behalf because of a serious illness or circumstance. In these cases, absences will not be counted.) Excessive absences may result in failure for the course. Lateness to class (especially chronic lateness) can also result in a poor participation grade.

Full attendance with little or no contributions to class discussion will result in a C grade.

Full attendance with moderate contributions will result in a B grade.

Full attendance with frequent and thoughtful contributions will result in an A grade.

Google Docs (worth 20% of final grade)

You are required to contribute twice a week to collaborative notes on class readings using Google Docs. You will need to read each day's assigned readings carefully and make at least 3 contributions to that day's Google Doc. That's usually six contributions per week.

Your contributions are due at 9 am each Tuesday and Thursday before class.

Contributions will be graded on both quantity and quality. Two days' worth of missing Google Doc contributions will not count against your grade.

Ongoing Independent Research Projects

You will design your own independent research project that will result in a final paper and a creative project. Deadlines are provided for proposals and rough drafts, as well as an annotated bibliography, final paper draft, and creative project. In addition, you will give a 15-20 minute presentation of your research at the end of class.

Annotated Bibliography (with at least 10 sources)—worth 10% of final grade

Proposals and Drafts—10%

Creative Project—15%

Final Paper (at least 15 double-spaced pages)—20%

Presentation—10%

Extra Credit

You can get extra credit to make up for additional absences from class or missing Google Doc contributions by attending academically oriented events and screenings that are sponsored by the Film and Media Studies department. In order to get the extra credit, you need to attend the event and then write a one-page summary and response to the event, linking the event to things we have discussed in class or to your study of film and media as a whole. This summary/response is due on a rolling basis, but must be submitted no more than 1 week after the event has taken place. Each event will make up for one additional absence or one day's missing Google Doc contribution. You can get up to four total extra credits.

Course Schedule FILM 406 WAR IN FILM AND MEDIA

	MONDAY SCREENING	TUESDAY CLASS	THURSDAY CLASS
Week 1		1/10: Introduction to the class	1/12: <u>Introduction to Film Genre</u> “What Is Generally Understood by the Notion of Film Genre?” (Altman, PDF); “A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre” (Altman, PDF)
Week 2	NO SCREENING: MLK DAY	1/17: <u>Theorizing War and Media</u> Preface and Ch. 1-3 of <i>War and Cinema</i>	1/19: Ch. 4-7 of <i>War and Cinema</i>
Week 3	1/23: <i>Images of the World and the Inscription of War</i> (<i>Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges</i> , Harun Farocki, 1988, 75 min.) and excerpts of <i>Triumph of the Will</i> (<i>Triumph des Willens</i> , Leni Riefenstahl, 1935)	1/24: <u>Representation and Propaganda</u> “Experiences of Modern Warfare and the Crisis of Representation” (Huppauf, H&W); “Leni Riefenstahl’s Contribution to the War Effort” (Doherty, H&W)	1/26: <u>The American War Story</u> Skim “Story Time” and read “Ambush at Kamikaze Pass” in <i>End of Victory Culture</i> ; “The War Film” (Belton, PDF) --Watch <i>Why We Fight: Prelude to War</i> (Frank Capra, 1942, 52 min.) in class
Week 4	1/30: <i>Air Force</i> (Howard Hawks, 1943, 124 min.)	1/31: <u>World War II at the Movies</u> Introduction to <i>Power & Paranoia</i> (Polan, PDF); “World War II and the Hollywood ‘War Film’” (Schatz, H&W), “Will this Picture Help to Win the War?” (Koppes and Black, H&W)	2/2: “The World War II Combat Film: Definition” (Basinger, H&W); “Hollywood and the World War II Conversion Narrative” (May, H&W) Final paper proposal due
Week 5	2/6: <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> (Steven Spielberg, 1998, 169 min.)	2/7: <u>World War II Revisited</u> “ <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> and American Triumphalism” (Auster, PDF); “Virtue Through Suffering: The American War Film at the End of Celluloid” (Allison, PDF)	2/9: <u>World War I and the Anti-War Film</u> “The United States’ Film Industry and World War One” (DeBauche, H&W); “War on Film: The American Cinema and World War I, 1914–1941” (Isenberg, H&W); “War and Cinema: Interpreting the Relationship” (Sorlin, H&W)

Week 6	2/13: <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> (Lewis Milestone, 1930, 136 min.)	2/14: “ <i>All Quiet on the Western Front: The Antiwar Film and the Modern Image of War</i> ” (Chambers, H&W)	2/16: <u>The Quagmire of Vietnam</u> Read Part III Ch. 3, 4, 7, 9 of <i>The End of Victory Culture</i> Annotated bibliography due
Week 7	2/20: <i>Apocalypse Now</i> (Francis Ford Coppola, 1979, 153 min.)	2/21: “Represented in the Margins: Images of African American Soldiers in Vietnam War Combat Films” (Woodman, PDF)	2/23: <u>The Return of Militarism</u> “Vietnam and the New Militarism” (Ryan and Kellner, H&W); “Make My Day!: Spectacle as Amnesia in Imperial Politics” (Rogin, H&W)
Week 8	2/27: NO SCREENING; instead, we will attend the Cinematheque screening of <i>Men in War</i> (Anthony Mann, 1957) Wednesday 3/1 at 7:30 pm, WH 208	2/28: “The Reagan Hero: Rambo” (Jeffords, PDF) *remember screening Wed. at 7:30 in WH 208	3/2: <u>The Cold War and the “Forgotten War”</u> Read “Premonitions: The Asian Death...” in <i>The End of Victory Culture</i> Creative project proposal due
WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK			
Week 10	3/13: <i>American Sniper</i> (Clint Eastwood, 2014, 133 min.)	3/14: <u>New Wars, Spectacle, and Terrorism</u> “The Gulf War Did Not Take Place” (Baudrillard, H&W); “A Cultural History of War Without End” (McAlister, H&W); “Techno-Muscularity and the ‘Boy Eternal’” (Boose, H&W)	3/16: Read Introduction and Ch. 2 of <i>Ugly War, Pretty Package</i> (skim Ch. 1) 5 pages of writing toward your final paper due
Week 11	3/20: <i>Battle Los Angeles</i> (Jonathan Liebesman, 2011, 116 min.)	3/21: Read the first 13 pages of Part IV: Afterlife in <i>The End of Victory Culture</i> ; “How to Recognize a War Movie” (Allison, PDF)	3/23: CLASS CANCELLED

Week 12	3/27: Play video games	3/28: <u>Video Games and War</u> Read Ch. 1 and Ch. 4 of <i>Gameplay Mode</i> (Crogan, PDF)	3/30: Read Introduction and Ch. 1 of <i>Playing War</i> Creative project rough draft due
Week 13	4/3: <i>Act of Valor</i> (Mouse McCoy and Scott Waugh, 2012, 110 min.) or other war video game-inspired movie	4/4: Read Ch. 2 of <i>Playing War</i>	4/6: Watch <i>Serious Games</i> (Harun Farocki, 2009-2010) in class Final paper rough draft due
Week 14	4/10: Class choice	4/11: Presentations	4/13: Presentations
Week 15	4/17: Class choice	4/18: Presentations	4/20: Last day of class; Presentations
Final paper due on final exam date (no exam is scheduled)			