

**CS308 REPRESENTATIONS OF WAR
FALL 2007**

Professor Erzen, Ph.D.

428 Hagerty Hall

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Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-11:18 in AV110

Course Description:

How does one represent the experience of war? How does the experience of war vary according to time, place, and identity? This is a course about war and culture, with a focus on the twentieth-century. Our primary concern is to consider how literary and cinematic forms have developed to make sense of the experience of war, and the ways wars are remembered and forgotten. We will read material on the Vietnam War, the first Persian Gulf War, child soldiers and civil war in Africa, the Iranian revolution, the Argentine military junta, and the United States after an imaginary apocalypse. Some of the texts are written from the perspective of those who experienced war while others utilize more experimental forms of representation. Issues of national and global identity, memory, commemoration, gender, race, sexuality, irony, trauma, and protest will be at the forefront of our inquiry. We will read a variety of genres including fiction, short stories, graphic novels, poetry, autobiography and memoir.

Readings:

Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Lawrence Thornton, *Imagining Argentina*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*

Ismael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*

Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower*

Available at SBX Book Store 1806 North High St., Phone: (614) 291-9528

Assignments:

The assignments for this course include: 3 essays, an in-class presentation of your discussion questions, and four 1-page reading responses posted to Carmen.

Exams: The in-class essays will not be cumulative but based on one or two books. They will include short and long essay questions.

Reading Responses: You should plan to post *four* 1-page responses to the books and films. Three of your responses should respond to a book (3 of the 5 books we are reading), one can be a response to a film. I will post guiding questions on Carmen for each book and film. As long as you complete this assignment, you will receive full credit for it.

Group Questions: In collaboration with a group, you will come up with 4-5 questions about the material from that day's reading to present to the rest of the class for discussion. You should post these questions on the Carmen discussion board the night before class. You may work together over email or meet outside class. At the beginning of class, your group will spend 10-15 minutes explaining why you chose those questions.

Attendance and Participation:

I expect students to be active participants in their education. This means that each student should come to class having carefully read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them. Because knowing how to articulate your ideas is a crucial part of the learning process, I expect you, as a member of the class, to contribute your own unique perspective to our discussions online or in the classroom

The real action of the course takes place in the classroom. Therefore, it is important and expected that you will be at every class session. Inevitably, an occasion may arise when you are unable to attend. Out of fairness to your classmates who do attend every class, chronic lateness and/or more than one unexcused absence will detract from your participation grade. It is fine to miss class for major religious holidays. To make up for a missed class, you may turn in a 1-page summary of the reading for that day. Finally, if you have any special needs or concerns with this course, please feel free to talk with me in person.

Grading:

Attentive presence, participation and group questions: 20%

Four 1-page (single-spaced) response postings: 20%

Three Essay exams: 20 points each= 60%

A= excellent work: well-argued and well-written

B= good work: argument not fully realized and/or some difficulties with writing and/or organization

C= acceptable work: argument sketched but not realized and/or problems with writing, organization or comprehension

D= below standard work: argument undeveloped and/or significant writing problems

F= Unacceptable work

My computer crashed, and my roommate ate my paper...

All written work should be in 12-point, double-spaced type, with standard margins, and pages numbered and stapled. I will not accept a paper that is not stapled. *All written work should be thoroughly proofread.* There are no extensions, and all assignments are marked down one-third of a letter grade for every late day. **After 3 days, if you have not turned in your paper, you will automatically receive a “0” for that paper. No exceptions.**

Student Conferences and E-mail Communication: Please stop by office hours or schedule an appointment if necessary. You are also welcome to email me with questions related to the course. However, do not send any information or requests in an email that you would not discuss with me in person. I will not answer any email I deem inappropriate.

Civility:

*Questions and discussions are welcome. The only requirement is that the questioner respects the opinions of others and does not monopolize class time.

*Early Departures: If there is a special circumstance that requires you to leave early, please notify me before class so I can make sure you get all the appropriate information concerning upcoming papers and assignments.

*And please: Turn off all cell phones and pagers.

Disability Services: Any student with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should identify him or herself to the instructor as early in the quarter as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations. You may also wish to contact the Office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall, 292-3307). Students are expected to know and understand the rules regarding academic misconduct, particularly the rules regarding plagiarism,

Plagiarism: Scholastic dishonesty in any form is a serious violation of academic integrity and university policy. Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own. As stated in the University's Code of Student Conduct, any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on exams, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course. There are no exceptions to this policy.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Thursday Sept. 20: Introduction to the course

Discussion of film clips from *Jarhead* and *Three Kings*

THE SHORT STORY AND NOVEL

Memory, Masculinity and the Vietnam War

Tuesday Sept. 25:

O'Brien, *The Things they Carried* pp.1-85

Thursday Sept. 27:

O'Brien, *The Things they Carried* pp.89-136

Film: *Hearts and Minds*

Tuesday Oct. 2:

O'Brien, *The Things they Carried* pp.137- end

Film: *Hearts and Minds*

Last day for O'Brien and film online postings

Magical Realism and the Experience of Trauma in Argentina

Thursday Oct. 4:

Thornton, *Imagining Argentina* pp.1-70

Tuesday Oct. 9:

Thornton, *Imagining Argentina* pp.70-137

Film: *Death and the Maiden*

Thursday Oct. 11: No Class but keep reading

Tuesday Oct. 16:

Thornton, *Imagining Argentina* pp.138-end

Film: *Death and the Maiden*

Last day for Thornton and film online postings

Thursday Oct. 18:

In -class essay

FORMS OF MEMOIR:

Childhood and War in Iran: A Graphic Novel

Tuesday Oct. 23:

Satrapi, *Persepolis* pp.1-78

Thursday Oct. 25:

Satrapi, *Persepolis* pp.80-end

Last day for Satrapi online postings

Childhood and War in Sierra Leone: Autobiography

Tuesday Oct. 30:

Beah, *A Long Way Gone* pp.

Thursday Nov. 1:

Beah, *A Long Way Gone* pp.

Film: *God Grew Tired of Us*

Tuesday Nov. 6:

Beah, *A Long Way Gone* pp.

Film: *God Grew Tired of Us*

Last day for Beah and film online postings

Thursday Nov. 8:

In -class essay

SCIENCE FICTION AND WAR

Representing Apocalypse and Utopia

Tuesday Nov. 13:

Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* pp.3-63

Thursday Nov. 15:

Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* pp.63-133

Film: *Blade Runner*

Tuesday Nov. 20:

Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* pp.134-201

Film: *Blade Runner*

Thursday Nov. 22: Thanksgiving

Tuesday Nov. 27:

Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* pp.202-end

Last day for Butler and film online postings

Thursday Nov. 29:

Wrap-up, Final Essay handed out

DUE Monday Dec. 3rd by 3PM in my box in 451 HAGERTY HALL