
MEDIA & WAR in Fall 2020 (CM4017)

Course Code	CM4017	Professor(s)	Noémie Zofia Oxley
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-305
Class Schedule	M: 12:40-14:15 in Q-A101 R: 10:50-12:25 in C-104	Office Hours	By appointment
Credits	4	Email	noxley@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

War, recalls Robin Andersen, “is understood and interpreted, justified and judged through the images and narratives that tell the stories of war. Most civilians experience military conflict through the signs and symbols of its depiction, their impression derived not from the battles in distant lands but from the manner they are rendered at home” (Andersen: 2006, p.xvi). This course thus examines the complex relationship between media and war in historical and contemporary perspectives, hoping to recount the stories of war and the history and culture of their telling, from the first “Modern War” in Crimea to the enduring war in Syria.

By referring to our own experiences as spectators (or witnesses) of war, we examine together how modern warfare has generated new visual cultures, new media networks, and new modes of witnessing, archiving, and disseminating conflicts. We interrogate the nature of the power relationship between military and media, especially focusing on the U.S. and Europe. Students, in the last part of the semester, question the actual impact of alternative perspectives in media and new media in challenging the “Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network” designed by Western media and the military.

Throughout the semester, the students explore and learn to analyze different media representations of war from Western and Non-Western perspectives, including photographs, films, press articles and fiction novels, television news coverage, video games, as well as amateur productions circulating on social media and drone images directly generated by the military. From press coverage in Crimea to propaganda in the U.S. and Germany during the Second World War, from the “Vietnam Syndrome” to the military-entertainment spectacle in Iraq, 9/11 as global war event, and continuing conflicts in Syria and Israel-Palestine, students learn to relate different modes of communicating war throughout history, and learn to retrace the history of struggle over war and its representation.

Course Learning Outcomes

Understand the evolution of war narratives in relation to the revolutions in Media and Communication, from the Press to the digital revolution.

Identify the connections between Military doctrine, political and media interests and the representation of war throughout the 20th and 21st century.

Accurately describe, interpret, and compare a wide range of media conveying narratives of war.

Demonstrate a detailed understanding of key theoretical debates on theory of media and war and their application on a different range of media.

General Education

- *Integrative Inquiry (coded CCI)*
- *Research, Interpretation, and Writing (coded CCE)*
- *Disciplinary Research Methods and Writing (coded CCR)*

Course Outline

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

COURSE TITLE: Media and War

COURSE NO: CM4017

PRE-REQUISITES: None

SEMESTER: Fall 2020

PROFESSOR: Noémie Oxley

CREDITS: 4

CLASS SCHEDULE: Mon 12:40 PM / Thur 10:50 AM **ROOM:** M. Q-509/Th. C-104

OFFICE HOURS: By appt

CONTACT: noxley@aup.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

War, recalls Robin Andersen, “is understood and interpreted, justified and judged through the images and narratives that tell the stories of war. Most civilians experience military conflict through the signs and symbols of its depiction, their impression derived not from the battles in distant lands but from the manner they are rendered at home” (Andersen: 2006, p.xvi). This course thus examines the complex relationship between media and war in historical and contemporary perspectives, hoping to recount the stories of war and the history and culture of their telling, from the first “Modern War” in Crimea to the enduring war in Syria.

By referring to our own experiences as spectators (or witnesses) of war, we examine together how modern warfare has generated new visual cultures, new media networks, and new modes of witnessing, archiving, and disseminating conflicts. We interrogate the nature of the power relationship between military and media, especially focusing on the U.S. and Europe. Students, in the last part of the semester, question the actual impact of alternative perspectives in media and new media in challenging the “Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network” designed by Western media and the military.

Throughout the semester, the students explore and learn to analyze different media representations of war from Western and Non-Western perspectives, including photographs, films, press articles and fiction novels, television news coverage, video games, as well as amateur productions circulating on social media and drone images directly generated by the military. From press coverage in Crimea to propaganda in the U.S. and Germany during the Second World War, from the “Vietnam Syndrome” to the military-entertainment spectacle in Iraq, 9/11 as global war event, and continuing conflicts in Syria and Israel-Palestine, students learn to relate different modes of communicating war throughout history and learn to retrace the history of struggle over war and its representation.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Understand the evolution of war narratives in relation to the revolutions in Media and Communication, from the Press to the digital revolution.
- Identify the connections between Military doctrine, political and media interests and the representation of war throughout the 20th and 21st century.
- Accurately describe, interpret, and compare a wide range of media conveying narratives of war.
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of key theoretical debates on theory of media and war and their application on a different range of media.

GLACC:

- *Integrative Inquiry (coded CCI)*
- *Research, Interpretation, and Writing (coded CCE)*
- *Disciplinary Research Methods and Writing (coded CCR)*

GRADING:

- **In-class or online participation through chat conversation:** You are expected to engage class discussion frequently and constructively. This requires not only keeping up with assigned readings, but also thinking critically about the ideas and examples at hand. You will need to contribute to every class through comments or questions, whether orally or through the chat conversation on Teams' platform. **10%**
- **In-class weekly quizzes on visual or reading material; homework:** Once a week class will begin with a 5 minutes quiz available on Teams, involving 2 or three short questions on the material given beforehand; Once a week students will respond to one or two questions posted on Teams' collaborative space. **20%**
- **A-synchronous and in-class/online presentations:** 2 group presentations will be organized throughout the semester, focusing on specific case studies (films, books, videos, photographs on war). The first one will take place live and the other one will be recorded through teams or other video-devices by students. **20%**
- **Mid-term exam. 20%**
- **Final paper:** Undertake a detailed analysis (2000-2500 words max) of a war representation of your choice by using the readings and the theories seen in class. This final paper can be written collaboratively. **30%**

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are STILL EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Tanine Allison. *Destructive Sublime. World War II in American Film and Media*. New Brunswick,

Newark & London: Rutgers University Press, 2018.

Steven J. Alvarez. *Selling War. A Critical Look at the Military's PR Machine*. Lincoln: Potomac Books, 2016

Edward Bernays. *Propaganda*, 1928.
<http://www.historyisaweapon.org/defcon1/bernprop.html#SECTION2>

John Bodnar. *The "Good War" in American Memory*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

Subarno Chattarji. *Memories of a Lost War. American Poetic Responses to the Vietnam War*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. (See BB for PDF).

Charles Davis. "The 'War on Terror' has won". *Al Jazeera*, 11 September 2017,
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/09/war-terror-won-george-bush-doctrine-170911082005701.html>.

Jennifer Good, Paul Lowe, Brigitte Lardinois, and Val Williams (Eds). *Mythologizing the Vietnam War: Visual Culture and Mediated Memory*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014.

Daniel C. Hallin. *"The Uncensored War". The Media and Vietnam*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Philip Knightley. *The First Casualty. The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*.

Jo McCormack. *France and the Algerian War (1954-1962)*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007.
<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.aup.fr/lib/aup/detail.action?docID=1040729>

Terence McSweeney. *The 'War on Terror' and American Film. 9/11 Frames Per Second*.
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Susan Sontag. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New
York: Picador, 2003 (PDF available on BB).

Tim Markham. *The Politics of War Reporting: Authority, Authenticity and Morality*. Manchester,
New York: Manchester University Press, 2011.

Jonathan Mermin, *Debating War and Peace: Media Coverage of U.S. Intervention in the Post-Vietnam Era*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Alexander Spencer. *Lessons Learnt. Terrorism and the Media*. Swindon: Arts And Humanities
Research Council, 2012.

Thomas Stubblefield. *9/11 and the Visual Culture of Disaster*. Bloomington & Indianapolis:
Indiana University Press, 2014.

Dubravka Zarkov. *The Body of war: media, ethnicity, and gender in the break-up of Yugoslavia*.
Durham: Duke University Press, 2007

Barbie Zelizer. *About to Die. How News Images Move the Public*. Oxford & New-York: Oxford
University Press, 2010. (Disponibile on the BB.)

CLASS SCHEDULE:

-
- War and media 1850-1918: Nation Building, PR, Memorialization.

September

Week I – 23rd – 25th:

Thursday 24th - Session I

TOPICS: War and media, a history of struggle over war and its representation

Week II - 28th – 2nd

Monday 28th – Session I

TOPICS: Shaping the perception of war: how news media define and perform their societal role related to war

READINGS: Philip Seib, “Delivering War to the Public: Shaping the Public Sphere” in Josef Seethaler, and al, *The Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts from World War I to the “War on Terror”* (ebook available on the library website).

Thursday 1st – Session II

TOPICS: Crimean War and the Emergence of the Foreign Correspondent.

READINGS: Philip Knightley. *The First Casualty. The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*. Chapter 1: "The Miserable Parent of a Luckless Tribe" 1854-1856.

October

Week III - 5th – 9th

Monday 5th – Session I

TOPICS: Emergence of Nation States and Modern Warfare

READINGS: Joseph Seethaler. *Selling War. The Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts*. Chapter: "War and the Public Sphere: European Examples from the Seven Years' War to World War I". (Ebook av. on AUP library website).

Thursday 8th - Session II

TOPICS: The role of PR in war

READINGS: Reading: Bernays: "The Psychology of public relations" (ch.2 "The New Propaganda" and 4: The "Psychology of PR"); Robin Anderson: "The Good War and the Fight between the Good and Evil".

Week IV – 12th – 16th

Monday 12th – Session I

TOPICS: The Colour of War: Senegalese Tirailleurs and WWI Colonial imagery

READINGS: Alison S. Fell, Nina Wardleworth, “The Colour of War Memory: Cultural Representations of Tirailleurs Sénégalais”.

Thursday 15th – Session II

TOPICS: Memorialization and World War I: Making War acceptable

READINGS: Dan Todman, “Remembrance and memorials”, <https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/remembrance-and-memorials>

- **The Visual Turn: WWII to the Vietnam War**

Week V – 19th -23rd

Monday 19th – Session I

TOPICS: The power of photographs

READINGS: Barbie Zelizer, *About to Die*. Chapter “Journalism, Memory, and the Voice of the Visual”.

Thursday 11th - Session II

TOPICS: Leni Riefenstahl “Triumph of the Will” – Propaganda as Entertainment

READINGS: Watch parts of Leni Riefenstahl’s “Triumph of the Will”; Alan Sennett, “Triumph of the Will as a Case Study”. Screening:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pxOfBQ5-OE&bpctr=1600865433>

Week VI - 26th - 30th

Monday 26th – Session I

TOPICS: Mid-term exam

Thursday 29th – Session II

TOPICS: The Good War in American Memory: The Good War

READINGS: John Bodnar. *The “Good War” in American Memory*. Chapter: “Split Screen”; or
Tanine Allison. *Destructive Sublime. World War II in American Film and Media*. Chapter 2: “The
Good War”? Style and Space in 1940s Combat Films.

October 28th, Mid-semester

November

Week VII – 2nd - 6th

Monday 2nd – Session I

TOPICS: Vietnam as a Public Affair Disaster: Structural inadequacy between the language on
war and its disturbing visual reality.

READINGS: Thomas Rid. *War and Media Operations. The US Military and the Press from
Vietnam to Iraq*.

Thursday 6th – Session II

TOPICS: Racism in War Movies

READINGS: Watch Spike Lee *Da Blood*; Read Kaleem Aftab, “The long history of racism in war movies”:

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20200604-the-long-history-of-racism-in-war-movies>

Week VIII – 9th – 13th

Monday 9th – Session I

TOPICS: The wars we can’t see, the wars we can’t represent

READINGS: Screening Claude Lanzmann: *Shoah*; Rithy Panh, *L’image Manquante*

November 11th to 13th, Fall Break (No classes)

November

- **US PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Orchestrating War representation, First Gulf War – 2003 Iraq War**

Week IX – 16th – 20th

Monday 16th – Session I

TOPICS: 9/11, a Global War Event.

READINGS: Thomas Stubblefield. 9/11 and the Visual Culture of Disaster. Introduction.

Thursday 19th – Session II

TOPICS. The Rise of the Military-Entertainment Complex, First and Second Gulf War

READINGS: Robin Andersen, “That’s Militainment! The Pentagon’s media-friendly ‘reality war’”, <http://fair.org/extra/thats-militainment/>; Robin Andersen, chapters 11-13.

November 16th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X – 23rd – 27th

Monday 23rd – Session I

TOPICS: Embedding Process vs independent journalism: “A Straw View of the War”/

READINGS: Thomas Rid. War and Media Operations. The US Military and the Press from Vietnam to Iraq. Chapter on Iraq; Dahr Jamail. “Media Myth and Ground Reality in Reporting from Iraq”. Screening: Abbas Fahdel, “Homeland: Iraq Year Zero”.

Thursday 27th – Session II

TOPICS: Glitches in the War on Terror Narrative: Abu Ghraib Photographs

READINGS: Allen Feldman 2005. "The Actuarial Gaze: from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib".

November 27th, last day to withdraw from a course

Last day to choose credit/no Credit option

- ***War today in the media and new media: secrecy and viral dissemination***

Week XI -30th – 4th

Monday 30th - Session I

TOPICS: Scopic regimes: drone warfare and necro-ethics. Considering the enemy in counter-terrorist doctrine

READINGS: Tyler Wall and Torin Monahan. "Surveillance and Violence from Afar: The Politics of Drones and Liminal Security-scapes". OR Derek Gregory. "Lines of descent." Open Democracy. 8 November 2011, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/lines-of-descent/>

Thursday 3rd – Session II.

TOPICS: Terrorism on the social media battlefield

READINGS: Imran Awan, "Cyber-Extremism: Isis and the Power of Social Media".

December

Week XII -7th - 11th:

Monday 7th – Session I

TOPICS: Telling one's own war on social media

READINGS: Alcyone WEMAËRE, "Syrian teen's war selfies draw attention and criticism",

<https://www.france24.com/en/20180224-syria-teen-selfie-tweet-eastern-ghouta-bombing-siege-controversy>; Aamna Mohdin, "The Slaughter of Aleppo is being recorded in real time on Twitter by its own victims",
<https://qz.com/861710/the-slaughter-of-aleppo-is-being-recorded-in-real-time-on-twitter-by-its-own-victims/>

Thursday 10th – Session II

TOPICS: Final Group Presentations

December 11th, last day of classes,

December 12th - 15th, reading days

December 16th – 22th, Final Exam

January 4nd, all grades due

Friday 23th - Session II

TOPICS: Soldiers' videos shot by American soldiers in Iraq: "The real nasty side of war that even movies like Saving Private Ryan just don't quite capture". Amateur videos shot on the

battlefield and the question of authenticity.

READINGS

TOPICS: Representing the Algerian War

READINGS: Guy Austin, "Representing the Algerian War in Algerian Cinema: *Le Vent des Aurès*".

TOPICS: Covering terrorism from the Homefront

READINGS: Helga Tawil- Souri. "Covering Terrorism in Arab Media".

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are STILL EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

-
- **In-class or online participation through chat conversation:** You are expected to engage class discussion frequently and constructively. This requires not only keeping up with assigned readings, but also thinking critically about the ideas and examples at hand. You will need to contribute to every class through comments or questions, whether orally or through the chat conversation on Teams' platform. **10%**
 - **In-class weekly quizzes on visual or reading material; homework:** Once a week class will begin with a 5 minutes quiz available on Teams, involving 2 or three short questions on the material given beforehand; Once a week students will respond to one or two questions posted on Teams' collaborative space. **20%**
 - **A-synchronous and in-class/online presentations:** 2 group presentations will be organized throughout the semester, focusing on specific case studies (films, books, videos, photographs on war). The first one will take place live and the other one will be recorded through teams or other video-devices by students. **20%**
 - **Mid-term exam. 20%**
 - **Final paper:** Undertake a detailed analysis (2000-2500 words max) of a war representation of your choice by using the readings and the theories seen in class. This final paper can be written collaboratively. **30%**

Other

Electronic Devices:

To eliminate unnecessary distractions and encourage strong class participation, all electronic devices, **including laptops** – essentially used to take notes, of course – must be turned off and put away during class time. In case of exceptional circumstances, please refer to me before class.

For more infos: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/feb/23/reading-writing-on-paper-better-for-brain-concentration>