Aesthetics, Values, and Authority: The Art of War

The Honors College, Florida International University
IDH 3006 ☀ Spring 2007
Instructor: Juan Carlos Espinosa
Monday/Wednesday 3:30 – 4:45 PM ☀ Room: CP 111
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Office: DM 237 ☀ Office Hours: By appointment

“War is not nice.”
---Barbara Bush

“No temáis una muerte gloriosa,
Que morir por la Patria es vivir.”
[Do not fear a glorious death. To die for the fatherland is to live.]
---Cuban National Anthem

“The only winner in the War of 1812 was Tchaikovsky.”
---Solomon Short

We will continue to explore the phenomenon of war through cultural lenses. This semester we will spend more time contemplating the reflections of others on war and less on our own reactions to cultural artifacts. The entire course is set on the background of two important books we will be reading throughout the semester, How America got it right by Bevin Alexander and The New American Militarism by Andrew J. Bacevich.

Course Requirements:
The course will be conducted as a seminar. Students are expected to come to class prepared and participate fully in the discussions. Assignments must be submitted electronically and on time. All written work must consistently adhere to a writing style manual of the student’s choice (e.g., Chicago, Turabian, MLA, etc.). A good quicky resource on writing is the The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing. Attendance is mandatory and tardiness is unacceptable. All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of The Honors College and Florida International University.

Assignments:

Book Review (20%) Students will submit a book review of a novel selected from the list at the end of the syllabus. The review should be approximately 5 pages in length (about 3500 words). The assignment is due on February 14. Here are some online guides to help you in preparing a book review: Queen's College, The Undergraduate Writing Center, or the Guide from Dalhousie University Library.

Précis (20%) Students will write a précis of a scholarly article, book chapter, or other work. You may select an item from the supplemental reading list or from another source in consultation with the instructor. A précis is “...a brief, original summary of the important ideas given in a long selection... [I]t is a concise and lucid summary that forsakes all unnecessary details (including illustrations, amplifications, and embellishments) in favor of reproducing the logic, development, organization and emphasis of the original. Retaining the substance of a fuller statement, it seeks to articulate another author’s thoughts by extracting the maximum
amount of information and carefully conveying it in a minimum number of words.” Learning to write a précis is an invaluable skill every scholar should possess. We will be dedicating a class session to the writing of a précis. The final product, an informative abstract, should not exceed 750 words. The abstracts will be available to your colleagues on the new course website. The definition comes from Classical Co-op, a good source on academic writing.

Research Paper (30%)
Students will write a research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor. The student should select a topic early in the semester. You may want to develop a paper on a topic or theme you worked on during last semester.

Class Participation/Electronic Anthology (30%)
We will be preparing a class project: an e-anthology of the best work produced by the students in the class. You will all be contributing editors. Students will review and edit each others work during the two class sessions, March 26 and 28. The selections will be posted on a website created by the class. A DVD version of the website will also be produced. Participation counts!

Required Texts and Materials:
Students will be required to purchase two books. The books have not been ordered through the library. Other assigned readings will be available on electronic reserve or at the reserved materials section of the library. These are listed under their corresponding subject headings, or will be distributed by email.


Electronic Anthology of War Poetry.

Supplemental Reading List


Mary Kaldor, “Beyond Militarism, Arms Races and Arms Control.” Available on electronic reserve.


Additional supplemental readings may be added throughout the semester.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 8, 10</td>
<td>Class will not meet. Continue reading the novel selected during the holiday break.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>Review of Spring semester syllabus, discussion of co-teaching selections.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 29, 31</td>
<td>How we remember: Commemorations, holidays, and monuments.</td>
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<td>- Jay Winter, “Commemorating War.”</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 5, 7</td>
<td>The Graphic Novel</td>
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<td>- <em>Shooting War.</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 12, 14</td>
<td>America in the World: A Discussion</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 19, 21</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
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<td>- Poetry Anthology on electronic reserve.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Feb. 26, 28</td>
<td>Theater</td>
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<td>- Aristophanes, <em>Lysistrata</em></td>
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<td>- <em>The Lysistrata Project</em></td>
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<td>- BBC News, <em>Sex boycott urged over war</em></td>
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<td>- <em>The Legacy of Lysistrata</em></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar. 5, 7</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>- National Anthems (including US, Palestine, France, and Cuba).</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 12, 14</td>
<td>Music (con’t)</td>
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<td>Summer Break</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mar. 26, 28</td>
<td>Work on e-anthology in class.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr. 2, 4</td>
<td>Work on e-anthology in class.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr. 9, 11</td>
<td>The New American Militarism</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr. 16, 18</td>
<td>Alexander versus Bacevich</td>
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**War Novel Reading List:**

Please select a novel from the following list and read it over the holiday. Prepare a book review of a minimum of five pages (or 3500 words). Be sure to make use the “cultural lenses” and themes we discussed in class during the last semester. The reviews are due on February 14, 2007.

1. Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (WWI)
5. Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (WWI)
10. Robert Ludlam, *The Bourne Identity* (Cold War)
11. Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead* (WWII)
14. Christopher J. Koch, *Highways to a War* (Vietnam, about a war photographer)
17. Anthony Lappe and Dan Goldman, *Shooting War* (Iraq, Graphic Novel)
19. Leon Uris, *Topaz* (Cold War)
20. Joseph Heller, *Catch 22,* (war, period)
22. Craig Eisendrath, *Crisis Game: A Novel of the Cold War*
25. Henry Green, *Caught* (WWII, firefighters in London)
27. Robert Graves, *Wife to Mr. Milton* (English Civil War)
29. Ha Jin, *War Trash* (Korean War)
30. Mary Renault, *The Last of the Wine* (Peloponnesian War)