Aesthetics, Values, and Authority: The Art of War
The Honors College, Florida International University
IDH 3005/3006 ☼ Fall 2008/Spring 2009
Instructor: Juan Carlos Espinosa
Monday 2:00 PM - 4:45 PM ☼ Room: GC 273B
Email: juancarlos.espinosa@fiu.edu ☼ Phone: (305) 348-6795
Office: DM 237 ☼ Office Hours: By appointment

“Great battles change the entire course of events,
create new standards of values, new moods, in armies and in nations.”
---Winston Churchill

“I find war detestable, but even more detestable are
those who praise war without participating in it.”
---Romain Rolland

“True hunting’s over, no herds to follow
Without game, men prey on each other”
---Jane’s Addiction, Three Days (1988)

War has been part of the human experience since our beginning as a species. It has been waged with rocks, guns, and swords, as well as with symbols and ideas. In this course, we will study the phenomenon of war through cultural lenses. We will look at war as represented in the visual arts, film, television, photojournalism, music, and literature. We will also look at how our vision of war is being affected by new media and technology. Special attention will be paid to propaganda theory and questions of intent, medium, control, interpretation, and impact. Our work will be supported by readings in history, political science, and cultural studies, as well as by the viewing of films, television programs, and other visual media including video games. The class will also be visiting the Wolfsonian-FIU Museum to view their extensive collection of propaganda. Please note this class is not about Sun Tzu’s classic The Art of War.

During the first semester we will try to develop and use analytical, critical, and emotional tools to get an understanding of the phenomenon of war. In addition to our readings, discussions, and ruminations, we will closely follow current events. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan serve as the inescapable background for everything we do in our class.

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.) Attendance is mandatory and tardiness is unacceptable. All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of The Honors College and Florida International University.
Short papers and class presentations (45%)
Students will submit three short papers of at least 1500 words on an assigned topic based on course readings and class lectures.

Group Project (35%)
Groups will select a topic in consultation with the instructor that builds upon class readings and discussions. The group will jointly write and submit a ten-page paper and present the project to the class during the last week of the semester. Multi-media presentations are encouraged.

Film Review (10%)
Students select a film about war from a list provided by the instructor and prepare a review of at least 1500 words.

Class Participation (10%)
Active participation in class and on the class Facebook site is required.

Required Texts and Materials:
Students will be required to purchase four books. Other readings, previews, or PowerPoint presentations are available on the class website: honors.fiu.edu/jc

Books:


Other reading:

Juan Carlos Espinosa, ed. *Special Readings on War and Culture*. Electronic document will be available on the class web page.

Other required materials or activities:

Students will be required to register and participate in the class social network site. An invitation to join will be sent to students during the first week of class. Students will also be required to attend a class session at the Wolfsonian-FIU at a date to be announced.
### Class Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 25</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Course Preview</td>
<td><strong>The War at Home: Sharing our personal experiences about Iraq</strong>&lt;br&gt;David D. Perlmutter, <em>Visions of War: Picturing Warfare from the Stone Age to the Cyber Age</em> Chapters 1-5.</td>
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<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>Labor Day – No Classes</td>
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<td>Sep 8</td>
<td>Visions of War and Violence</td>
<td>Perlmutter, Chapters 6-8; Stephen F. Eisenman, <em>The Abu Ghraib Effect</em></td>
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<td><strong>SHORT PAPER #1 DUE BY NOON TODAY</strong></td>
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<td><a href="https://www.archives.gov/">Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from World War II</a>, National Archives Collection, Washington, DC.</td>
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<td>Oct 13</td>
<td>Honors College Convocation – No classes</td>
<td><em>Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori: Recruitment and Reality</em>&lt;br&gt;View recruitment videos posted on class Facebook site, <em>Special Readings</em>, items 17-21.</td>
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Oct 20  Shooting War: the Development of Photojournalism  

Oct 27  War in your Living Room: News, Entertainment and the Cold War  
Hedges, *War is a force that gives us meaning*.  
Class will be viewing an episode of Star Trek.

Nov 3  In the Dark: War and Film  
Class will be watching the film *Cinema Combat: Hollywood Goes to War*. Watch film trailers on the class Facebook site. Select your film from list provided by professor.

Nov 10  In Rotation: War and the Internet  
Find an example of soldier/citizen video blogging, reporting or film. Bring examples to class for discussion. FILM REVIEW DUE

Nov 17  Group Projects Work Day – Meet in Class

Nov 24  It’s Your War

Dec 1  Group Projects Work Day – Meet in Class  
SHORT PAPER # 3 DUE BY NOON TODAY

Dec 9  Presentation of Final Projects (date and time is subject to change)