Syllabus

What We Understand about Irregular Warfare from Film
Spring 2020

About Me

I am not a political scientist although I am frequently mistaken for one due to the kinds of work I do and the scholars with whom I collaborate. Instead, I completed by PhD in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilization—which is formally in the humanities—and an MA from the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago. I suffered nearly ten years at the RAND Corporation and another four years at the United States Institute of Peace before being fortunate enough to join the faculty at Georgetown. (You can read more at my website: christinefair.net.) This means that I have spent the vast majority of my adulthood studying various political and military issues pertaining to South Asia, particularly in the countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and increasingly Myanmar (which is in Southeast Asia). My own research is mixed methods in that I draw upon qualitative and quantitative data and research methodologies.

I believe learning—and teaching—should be an enjoyable activity rather than a pestiferous undertaking. Therefore, I bring to my classroom my (often ribald) sense of humor. (If you’re not having fun…at least I’ll be having fun.) If you want to see what you are getting into before signing up for my course, you can peruse videos at my Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/TheChristinefair. You can also peruse some of the quotidian nonsense that a woman in this business has to endure by perusing the comments. (Trigger warning: some of the comments are bigoted or otherwise exceedingly boorish.)

I believe in being direct in providing verbal and written feedback, as this is most efficient means of communicating. This means that I will not preface my criticisms with an inventory of your past brilliance to lessen the pique of necessary critique. Take this as a sign of respect rather than discourtesy.

While students are not entitled to their own facts (when facts are empirically known or knowable), in this course, I explicitly encourage students to cultivate their own points of view about these facts, how we know them and what import derives from them. In this course, we will often ask ourselves the following questions: 1. What is known? 2. What is knowable (presuming reasonable resources)? 3. What is not knowable (presuming reasonable resources)? While I frequently write commentary on political events, I do not expect you to share my views. At no point should students feel compelled to rehearse my arguments in class, papers or elsewhere. Finally, I use a red font—sometimes in bold—to indicate things that are important. Why? Red is the universal color that says “Look! You need to seriously pay attention to this!” This should not be a concern as some students have repined in the past.
About this Course:

In its inception, the “war film” and its creators have played prominent roles in, *inter alia*, setting political agendas, advocating policies, constructing images of the enemy other, defining civilization, manufacturing consent for or opposition to war, recreating and reproducing race and gender stereotypes, and providing information about a conflict that shapes peoples’ opinion of the conflict irrespective of the film’s accuracy. Most Americans, as well as citizens of other countries, learn of conflicts through the cinematographic depiction of them rather than their formal study. Unfortunately, despite the pervasive influence of film and other forms of media culture, mainstream political science has generally considered these cultural artifacts unworthy of serious inquiry. This course departs from this intellectual position and contends that film can be an important medium through which we can understand international politics but, more importantly, think critically about how films facilitate such understandings.

This course begins with an overview of the essential practices and significant “languages” that film makers and writers use to create meaning through film. Learning the “grammar” of films will enable students to become more cognizant of how war and related concepts are portrayed in the media cultural products they regularly consume and the understandings of those war such films facilitate.

This course will focus upon irregular warfare, which the US military defines as:

> “a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”¹

After providing a foundation on how one reads a film, the subsequent classes will examine various examples of irregular wars through the lens of two films that represent very different points of view about them. I provide several, brief readings intended to inform the student about the conflict depicted in the film. In this class, students will learn about various conflicts while also learning to think critically about irregular wars are depicted through the film.

Topics covered in this course will include British and European colonial wars in Africa and Asia; the Vietnam War from the optics of French, American; Korean and Vietnamese citizens; the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan from the optics of Russian and American films; the War on Terrorism; the use of drones; intelligence failure; nuclear deterrence as well as a reflection upon race and gender in constructing heroism. This course will not cover the great wars or the Korean wars. Because this course relies upon films which depict a variety of brutalities, it may not be suitable for everyone.

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In this course, students will construct original arguments about how specific films create, reinforce or destabilize predominant views of war generally and specific wars in American society. To do so, we will closely study the ideas which are embedded in films as well as the techniques which film directors and writers use to convey a message or argument.

Course Learning Objectives

First and foremost, this course aims to develop critical media literacy. For this class critical media literacy is generally defined as “the ability to understand, analyze, evaluate and create media messages in a wide variety of forms.” However we will not engage in “creating” media messages per se.

Most consumers of film and other media cultural productions are not aware that the media is in fact educating them because the pedagogy of the medium is usually invisible, unconscious and implicit rather than explicit. This course will develop critical media literacy skills to make students aware of how war films construct meanings, influence and shape opinions about a conflict, and impose a specific set of messages and values upon the viewer.

To develop critical media literacy, students will:

- Learn to recognize and analyze media codes and conventions such as visuals, sounds, scene framing, styles of narration;
- To think about the economic structures that shape the films we consume (these are not charitable activities; who is the presumed consumer; what is presumed about purchasing power);
- Become aware of how films foster stereotypes, dominant values, and ideologies and critically evaluate them. Students will question who made these choices and why;
- Develop competencies to interpret the multiple meanings and messages articulated in the films.
- Better identify facts from fiction in film, which is often harder than it seems.
- Distinguish reportage from advocacy.
- Learn to understand how advertisements differ from film? Can we even tell the difference in some cases?

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• Identify, explain and justify the various choices the producers made in the film such that we can inform choices and set and sustain appropriate degrees of critical distance from the film.

• To think critically about the larger impacts of the ways in which films depict a war and those who wage it. Students will be encouraged to reflect upon the ways in which a given film normalizes or creates stereotypes about race, gender, ethnicity or other identity groups germane to the film or films in question.

In this course, I will encourage students to consider not only what messages a filmmaker conveys in his/her film but also who they portray in a particular message as well as how they portray them. By developing critical media literacy, students will identify and interrogate the various biases, values, and points of view of films and the power relationships they represent.

In addition to developing critical media literacy, students will also strengthen their analytical, research, and writing skills.

Instructional Methodology

This is not intended to be a lecture-style course; rather, it is a seminar. I expect all students to come prepared (having watched all films and read all materials) and engage in a class discussion that is structured around questions and answers to illuminate key aspects of the course films and supporting readings. While I will end the course discussions with key takeaways, you are expected to fully contribute.

Note: This cannot be a discussion-based course if you have not done the readings or watched the films.

Course Expectations

Students are not expected to have an extensive background on the conflicts studied in this course or a prior background with the study of film or critical media literacy. However, students are expected to be curious not only about the conflicts we will study but also about the ways in which film informs our beliefs about the conflicts specifically and war more generally. Students are expected to come prepared to each class; to take notes on readings and films; and share their thoughts and insights with the class. In this course, there is rarely a singular correct answer. Students will bring to these films their own experiences and indeed it is the individuality of our experiences that help create meaning in these films, irrespective of authorial intent.

Course Requirements and Means of Assessment

To assess learning in this class, students will draft several kinds of written products, including:
1. Three brief critical essays: (Maximum word count is 3,500 words each). [Topics are provided in Appendix A]. Each essay accounts for 33.3% of the final grade, for a total of 100%.

Due Dates:
Essay 1: 5 pm. 17 February.
Essay 2: 5 pm. 6 April.
Essay 3: 5 pm 1 May.

Please see Appendix B for tips on successful writing. See Appendix C for grading scale and descriptions of expectations for each grade.

You must submit all assignments via email in Word. All documents should be named as following: Firstname_Lastname_Essay1.doc, Firstname_Lastname_Essay2.doc, Firstname_Lastname_Essay3.doc. Include yourself on the cc line and retain as proof of timely submission.

Penalty for late submission:
For each day late, you will receive a full letter degrade decrement. Thus an A paper becomes a B paper. A B paper becomes a C paper. It has been my experience that any increase in quality by being late does not make up for the lateness penalty. I will make exceptions to this policy, only in the event of a documented illness or family emergency. You must notify me before the due date.

Class Participation and Commentary:

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Class participation includes completing assigned readings, attending all classes (unless a student is ill, has a religious obligation, or has some other legitimate emergency), and contributing to class discussion. I strongly encourage students to take notes on the readings to facilitate recall during our class discussions.

Class participation is not a part of your formal grade; however, it will play a factor in determining borderline grades. For example, if a student’s grade is a B+ but is very close to an A- and the student was an effective partner in classroom discussions and demonstrated that s/he had a competent mastery of the reading, I will give her/him an A-. If s/he was not a participant in class discussions and/or evidenced little understanding of the assigned readings, she/he will get the B+.

Final Course Grades:

You will receive grades commensurate with the quality of the work irrespective of the performance of others in the class. (That is: materials for this course are not graded on a curve.) Students who fail to turn in one of these assignments cannot pass the course. You must at least attempt all assessments. I do not generally round up in final grade determination except in those cases in which the student was a regular participant in class discussions, who came to class
prepared and offered relevant insights that reflected a competent mastery of the materials. (Translation: content-free bloviations do not count!)

**Policy on Grade Disputes:**

I make every effort to be fair. Ultimately, grading of products for this course may be subjective on occasion. If you believe that I was unfair in my assessment, you **must** request a reconsideration of your grade within **48 hours of receiving your grade**. However, be aware that while I may have mistakenly assessed your paper downward by overlooking some critical virtue(s), I may also have missed serious flaws upon first review and unfairly assessed it upward. **My re-grade of your paper will reflect the results of this complete review of your exam, be it positive, negative, or neutral. Make your case wisely.** You have the option of appealing this grade by emailing the director of SSP (Professor Keir Lieber). He will form an appeal board. The board’s grade is final and binding upon us both.

**Policy on Missed Classes:**

Per SSP policy states that students may not miss class except in extraordinary circumstances, such as illness or family emergency. Students are advised in the SSP Student Handbook to request approval from the instructor as soon as possible in advance of the absence.

Work travel is the most common reason for class absences. Again, students are required to seek approval from the professor in advance of being absent. In the event that a student is absent from any classes in a given course, instructors may:

- Reduce the final letter grade to reflect the absence(s)
- Require additional course assignments before assigning the final grade
- Request that a student be withdrawn from the course.

Students missing three or more classes are asked to withdraw from the course. All students are required to be physically present in class. Zoom and other teleconference tools are only acceptable when needed for instructional continuity.

Students who expect to miss more than two classes are required to notify the Director of Graduate Studies immediately. In drastic circumstances, the program, in consultation with the course professor, may withdraw students from a course if they inexplicably miss the first class meeting or who are absent for two or more classes. If you think you may miss the first class, be contact me immediately so that I may work with you to make alternative arrangements.

**Suggested Practices for Success**

It has been my experience from over more than a decade of teaching that the below practices best-situate students for success.

1. Complete the readings and film viewing prior to class. You’ll understand the material better and be ready to participate in discussions. You may also want to form a study group to exchange
ideas about the readings. However, this does not mean that you outsource certain readings or films to each other. This is the surest way to fail. Do not entrust your success in this class to other students.

2. Keep notes on the readings and films. It’s easy to get the readings and films mixed up in class. Take notes and bring them along with you to help keep everything straight. (I do this.) I strongly suggest that your notes be hand-written. As I note below, there is a growing body of literature that suggests that the use of computers to take notes results in a shallower processing of information. I leave this to you. (I use both means, frankly.)

3. If you aren’t familiar with a word, a historical event, or film or anything else you encounter in the readings or in the films, LOOK IT UP. (Be aware that Google is not always accurate.) If you need assistance, email me.

4. Participate in class discussions. While I do not use this as a part of your formal grade, if you’re on the margin of a higher grade, I will round up for those who are active participants.

5. Work on the assignments ahead of time. I am always happy to provide feedback on rough drafts provided that I have adequate time. This is on a “first come, first serve” basis.

6. Proofread, proofread, proofread. I encourage you to share your paper with other students for their proof-reading and evaluation. However, under no circumstances, should they engage in substantive revisions as this is considered plagiarism.

7. Come see me. I’m always willing to offer help, brainstorm ideas, or provide feedback.

Content Warning

This course centers around films that depict war. Consequently, almost every film used in this course is designed for mature audiences. Every film on this syllabus depicts, inter alia, various forms of violence (often graphic), exploitative sexuality, profane language which often includes racist, anti-Semitic, misogynist and other crude verbiage among other issues that may not be palatable for some students. Please consider carefully whether you are prepared for watching and analyzing the course material. Please share any concerns or questions you may have as soon as possible. These films are intended to make you feel uncomfortable.

In full disclosure, I do not like scenes of violence as I suffer PTSD. Consequently, I often look away from prolonged scenes of brutality because they trouble me. There is no requirement that you fully watch all scenes of violence. It’s often adequate that you know it is there and how it is used in the film.

Email Etiquette

This is not the only course I teach; you are not my only students; and teaching is not my only obligation. I receive about 100 emails each day. Please expect that it will take one full business day to respond to you. If you email me between Friday evening and Monday morning, expect that I will get back to you by late Monday or Tuesday morning. Also, please do not address your emails to me using my first name. If this guidance strikes you as odd, let me provide you some reading on this issue (Neumann, 2017; Files et al., 2017; Langin, 2018).³

³ J. Neumann, “Why are female doctors introduced by first name while men are called ‘Doctor’?,” Washington Post, June 24, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-
Policy on Computers, Phones and Social Media

I expressly forbid students from filming or recording these lectures. I will ask students who do so to leave the class. I will record this class as an absence. I will also report this to SSP leadership. I also forbid students from posting quotes or photos to social or other media attributable to me, this class or your classmates. I enforce this policy to ensure that we all enjoy a safe environment to engage the literature and the intellectual objectives of this course. I will accord no exceptions. (Note that I may record this lecture for the use of students who may have missed a lecture or for other administrative reason.)

I do not ban laptops, tablets, or cellphones in class as I believe doing so is ableist and because I will encourage you to look up answers to questions that you do not know when I pose these questions. However, I insist that you refrain from “leisure internet activities” during class. Examples of such prohibited activities include but are not limited to: texting or emailing associates (unless it’s an emergency); posting to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.; online shopping, dating or other recreational activities. (I note these particular activities because they have occurred.)

I would also discourage you from using your laptop to take notes either during class or even on the readings. While this is your choice, there is a growing body of literature that finds that notetaking on your computer promotes a shallower processing of information (Mueller and Oppenheimer 2014) and also distracts students nearby (Sana, Weston, and Cepeda 2013).

Academic Honesty

Please be certain that you understand Georgetown’s policy and procedures regarding academic honesty. It is available here: https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/policies.

For additional guidance please read “What is plagiarism?” (https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/whatisplagiarism) and “Plagiarism checklist”

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Note on Disabilities and Other Required Accommodations

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the Campus Office Responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

Also, if you believe you need help, please contact me and I will help you navigate the university’s bureaucracy to obtain a formal dispensation. Please do not hesitate to seek help from me or others in the program or university. Please consider us as your allies in your educational experiences. You can find additional information about this at the Disability Support Services’ webpage: https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability.

If you already have a documented physical, learning or other disability, I will make appropriate accommodations. Please contact me so that we can discuss these arrangements.

Note on Religious Obligations

If you anticipate any conflicts between the schedule in this syllabus and your religious obligations, please inform me so that we can make alternate arrangements. (Do not presume that I will know your religious observance habits based upon your name, for example.)

Plan for Class Continuity During University Closures

The Washington D.C. metropolitan area can experience severe weather. In some cases, the University will close the campus. Given that our classes meet once a week and given your varied schedules, it is nearly impossible to reschedule a cancelled class. **For these reasons, classes will NOT be cancelled when the university is closed.**

The preferred plan for course continuity is the Zoom feature of Canvas. I know from experience that those of us who live in Virginia during inclement weather may not have internet access; however, Zoom can be used on our smart phones as well. Please ensure that Zoom is downloaded to your computers and smart phones at the start of the semester.

To Join Zoom Meeting
https://georgetown.zoom.us/j/434489738

One tap mobile
+16465588656,,434489738# US (New York)
+16699006833,,434489738# US (San Jose)
Dial by your location
   +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
   +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 434 489 738
Find your local number: https://zoom.us/u/ao5MIkWtk

Join by SIP
434489738@zoomcrc.com

**Alternate Arrangement:** If you do not have a smart phone and you do not have access to the internet, you can call the following conference call number and you will at least have audio access to the lecture. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A SMART PHONE THE DAY CLASS IS CANCELED. DUE TO BY TEXTING ME: +1-202-460-9295. Details are below:
   Conference Dial-in Number: (515) 603-3171
   Host Access Code: 288542*
   Participant Access Code: 288542#

Please be sure to charge your phones or have a standby external battery pack. (I also strongly advise to have a battery pack fully charged as we enter the season of inclement weather.) A missed class will be treated as any other missed class unless there is a very compelling excuse.

**University Code of Student Conduct**

Student conduct is prescribed by the CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT, available here: https://studentconduct.georgetown.edu/code-of-student-conduct. I expect students to comport themselves accordingly.

**University Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in Education**

Georgetown University's Center for Securities Studies (CSS) and the Security Studies Program supports the University's commitment to diversity. The University has a policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in Education. Additionally, the University considers acts of hate and bias unacceptable and antithetical to its commitment to an inclusive and respectful community.

Students who have concerns about treatment that they have experienced are encouraged to discuss these concerns with the director of SSP. You may also reach out to the representative of the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA). Students who want to pursue a formal complaint of discrimination may do so by contacting IDEAA: (http://ideaa.georgetown.edu). Additionally, students may report concerns of hate and bias at http://biasreporting.georgetown.edu/. A member of the Hate & Bias team will discuss your concerns with you.
Copyright

The materials used in Georgetown University courses (“Course Materials”) generally represent the intellectual property of course instructors which may not be disseminated or reproduced in any form for public distribution (e.g., sale, exchange, etc.) without the written permission of the course instructor. Course Materials include all written or electronic documents and materials, including syllabi, current and past examination questions/answers, and presentations such as lectures, videos, PowerPoints, etc., provided by a course instructor. Course Materials may only be used by students enrolled in the course for academic (course-related) purposes. Published course readings (book chapters, articles, reports, etc.) available in Canvas are copyrighted material. These works are made available to students through licensed databases or fair use. They are protected by copyright law, and may not be further disseminated or reproduced in any form for distribution (e.g., uploading to websites, sale, exchange, etc.) without permission of the copyright owner.

Required Films

There are no required texts for this course. However, there are about two films per week. I have worked with CSS leadership to make some of these films available for student use on a check-out basis. Each Friday (TBA) there will be a public viewing, which will be available to all CSS students. Also note that most of these films can be acquired inexpensively from Amazon, Netflix and other content providers to which you or your friends may subscribe.

However, should you choose not to avail of the public viewing of the assigned films, it is your responsibility to obtain and view the film.

In some cases, I will place films on Canvas. This will be noted in the syllabus. The films I will place on Canvas are those that are already available on Youtube or a film that is very rare and is not available on Amazon, Netflix, YouTube or other such provider.

Also note that I highly recommend the VLC media player which is available for free. This seems to be the most flexible media view and is most accepting of different formats.

Required Films, not on Canvas, include:


Course Readings

Class #1. (15 January)

Part 1: Theorizing War and Media
Altman, Rick. “What is generally understood by the notion of film genre?” in Film/Genre (London; British Film Institute, 1999): 13-29.


Begin familiarizing yourself with T. Corrigan’s “A Short Guide to Writing About Film.” You will be expected to use this book to inform your writing assignments.

Additional (non-required reading):

Part 2: Practicing what we learned by examining “Citizen Soldier” by Three Doors Down.

We will watch a music video by Three Doors Down, called “Citizen Soldier.” It is available on YouTube here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgV6VUinDEA and is also on Canvas.

Read about this video here:


For this video and all other films, we will employ the MAPS (mode, audience, purpose, and situation) protocol to guide student thinking proposed by Rodesiler. Consider each element carefully:

Mode: The mode can be, inter alia, speech, music, film, and pictures, or a combination. Reflect upon the mode(s) that the video uses to convey meaning. Recognition of these modes and how they are used to convey meaning is critical to understanding how films (or any other media cultural production) are specifically and strategically crafted to influence our perception. In the case of this video, the creators blend multiple modalities such as music and moving images.

How does a consideration of the modalities used help us decode the intended audience, the purpose of the video and the messages the artists are trying to convey?

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Audience: Once we’ve considered the *mode(s)* the film employs to convey a message or set of messages, let’s consider who the intended audience(s) is/are. To help us identify the potential audience, we may need to consider other features such as the pacing of the film, the font used in any written messaging, any illustrations or guest appearances. We may want to consider the context in which the film in question is shown.

Once we discern who the most likely target audience is, we can better determine whether you or I fall into this target audience and reflect upon how the message influences us. This also helps us identify the *purpose* of the media message.

Purpose: Identifying the author’s/filmmaker’s purpose in producing the film in a specific mode, conveying a particular message to a select audience is a fundament of critical media literacy. After all, to respond appropriately to a message, we must be able to see through the basic content motives of amusing, (mis)informing, persuading, entertaining.

Turning to “Citizen Soldier,” a music video by a popular band sponsored by the U.S. Army National Guard and the likely audience, which is likely male teenagers and young adults (based upon who is depicted in the video), we can then assess how the video advances this appeal. What purpose does it ultimately service? And once we understand the purpose behind a media message, we can better assess, among other issues, what kind of race, gender, ethnic, religious stereotypes as well as social or economic power relations the film advances.

Situation: Finally, consider the situational details of the media message. What is the social climate and time when the message is made? Is a period of war? Is a post-war period? What are popular sentiments towards war generally or the specific war depicted? Understanding the social climate and timing of a message likely casts light upon the values, ideas and even the credibility of the message itself.

Situational questions which we may want to ask of “Citizen Soldier” include: why was this video made specifically for theatres? Why are movie theatres an attractive venue for such a message? Before what kind of films was this video played (e.g. RomComs, dramas, super hero, action movies)? Do the films before which this was played indicate something about the target demographics of the message? Are there other contextually significant issues that may condition our reception of the message?

Note that no matter what intentions the creator had in mind, the meaning of these films/videos are produced by the individual and conditioned by our own characteristics and experiences. Thus no matter how hard the film-maker tries to make us feel or experience a particular sentiment, it is likely that different films mean different things to each of us. “Meaning production” therefore is an interactive activity. For this reason, consider how you’d respond to this film if you were of a different race, gender, ethnicity, national origins etc.

Class #2 Colonial Wars in Africa (22 January)

Because this is a new activity for most of you, we will watch this film in class. Please come prepared having read the below articles. These articles will orient you to the empirics of the Beor
War. As always, consider the questions pertaining to Mode, Audience, Purpose and Situation described in Class #1.


**Required Film:**

*Breaker Morant* (This film is about the Boer War, 107 minutes, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080310/?ref_=nv_sr_1?ref_=nv_sr_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080310/?ref_=nv_sr_1?ref_=nv_sr_1)) (Available on Canvas and Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GS7uwvy57k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GS7uwvy57k)).

**Class #3: Colonial Wars in Africa (29 January)**

Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019): pp.1-84. NB: We will continue to revisit this text throughout the course. Become conversant in the main themes of this reading.

*Anglo-Zulu War of 1879*


*Optional readings:*


Michael Lieven, “‘Butchering the Brutes All Over the Place': Total War and Massacre in Zululand, 1879,” History, Vol. 84, No. 276 (October 1999), pp. 614-632.

**Required Film:**

Zulu (1964, 2 hrs. 19 mins. British soldiers do battle with Zulu warriors at Rorke's Drift. [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0058777/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0058777/). *This will be a class viewing on Friday, 24 January*. Details to be announced.
**The Battle of Algiers (1954-1962)**


**Required Film:**

**Class #4: Colonial Wars in Asia (5 February)**

**The French in Vietnam**

M. Kathryn Edwards, Contesting Indochina: French Remembrance between Decolonization and Cold War (Berkeley: UC Berkeley Press, 2016), Intro, Ch. 1, Ch. 7 (pp. 1-33; 167-207).


“Passerine Bird (Con chim vành khuyên),” at https://www.cseashawaii.org/projects/programs/film/subtitling/vietnam/. A pdf of this description of this film is on Canvas.

**Required Films:**
**Diên Biên Phú** (1992, 2 h 20 mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0104105/?ref_=kw_li_tt). On Youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3gpx882qYy and Canvas. We will also view this on Friday 31 January.


**Optional Film:**

Class #5: Colonial Wars in Asia (12 February)
The British in India (~1600-1947)


Required Films:

Mangal Panday: The Rising (2005, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0346457/). This will be a class viewing on 7 February.

** First Essay Due on or Before 5 pm. 17 February. **

Class #6: The American Vietnam War (19 February)


Required Films:
The Deer Hunter (1978, 3 hrs, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077416/). Class viewing on Friday February 14. (Also available on Amazon.) Terrific Valentines’ Day film, am I right?
The White Badge (Hayan chonjaeng (Korean title), 1992, 2 hr 2mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0111700/). Available on Canvas and YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQTNZgVTK1M.

Optional film:
The only American film that was made during the war was The Green Berets (1968, 2 hrs 22 mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0063035/). This film is not required viewing unless you choose to write about it in one of the papers. It can be found on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jH9tHBg_Hnw&list=PLEtiWC-MctTWkVRXvizmem0Y9ZZuKOtt4. (It will also be available on Canvas.)

Class #7: The American Vietnam War Cont. (26 February)

Refresh your notes from last week’s readings as you watch the below required films.


Optional Films:

Apocalypse Now (1979, 2 hr 27 mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0078788/). Class viewing on Friday 21 February. This is the film that was released originally. It differs from the “Final Cut” version in significant ways. For a description of how it differs, see:


Class #8: The American Vietnam War Cont. (March 4)

Refresh your notes from previous week’s readings as you watch the below required films.


The films for this week all depict the conflict from the lens of Vietnamese, Korean and Australian filmmakers.

Required Films:
The Odd Angry Shot (1979, 1 hr. 72, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0079652/). Available on canvas. This is an Australian film. On canvas.

When the Tenth Month Comes (Bao gio cho den thang muoi (Vietnamese title)1984, 1 hr 17 mins, http://archive.bampfa.berkeley.edu/film/FN7751). Available on Canvas and YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSJ7g2zGD0k.

Optional Film:

Another Vietnamese film, which is not required, is The Abandoned Field: Free Fire Zone (Cánh đồng hoang (Vietnamese title) C:\Users\c_chr\Dropbox\WarandFilm\Films, 1 hr 30 mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0078730/). Available on Youtube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBpZUCrAXTk.

*NB: These Vietnamese films are very hard to find. You may want to save them for future use.

*Spring Break: 6 March- 16 March 2019*
Class #9 The Soviet War in Afghanistan (March 18)

Review Porter’s *Military Orientalism*.


**Required Films:**

*The Beast* (sometimes referred to as *The Beast of War*) (1988, 1 hr.51, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094716/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094716/)). Available on YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9CjUW9QJvc&list=PLbyE-WPbWxcn3dcf9MGaABj3hJ3ZB26Yk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9CjUW9QJvc&list=PLbyE-WPbWxcn3dcf9MGaABj3hJ3ZB26Yk), and canvas.

*Rambo III* (1988, 1 hr.52, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0095956/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0095956/)). A terribly produced version is available at YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU_t60Ty3F8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU_t60Ty3F8). It can also be had on Amazon.

Class #10 The Soviet War in Afghanistan Cont. (March 25)

Review your notes from last week. Consider these four films together. How do they depict American, Russian and Afghan combatants? Specifically reflect upon Porter’s *Military Orientalism*.


Class #11: Gender and War in Film (1 April)


**Required films:**


** Second Essay Due on or Before 5 pm. 6 April. **

**Class #12 “The Global War on Terror” (8 April)**

*The War in Iraq*


James DeFronzo, The Iraq War: Origins and Consequences, (New York: Westview Press, 2009); Ch. 6 "The Iraq War: Causes, Invasion, Post-Invasion Policies.” (pp. 127-170) and Ch. 8 "Post-Invasion Iraq" (pp. 195-225).


**Required Film:**

*The Green Zone* (2010, 1 hr. 55 mins, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0947810/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0947810/)). Available on Amazon. **This will be a class viewing on April 3, 2019.**

**Class #13 “The Global War on Terror” Cont. (15 April)**

*The War in Afghanistan*


**Required Film:**

*Restrepo.* (2010, 1 hr. 33 mins, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1559549/?ref_=nv_sr_1?ref_=nv_sr_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1559549/?ref_=nv_sr_1)).

*Kilo Two Bravo* (This is a British film. In the U.K. it was released under the name of *Kajaki: A True Story*. 2104, 1 hr 48, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3622120/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3622120/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2).) Available on Amazon and Canvas.

**Optional Films:**


**Class #14 The Drone Wars (22 April)**


** Required Films: **


Good Kill. (2014, 1 hr. 42 mins, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3297330/). This will be a class viewing on 17 April.

** Optional film:**


** Second Essay Due on or Before 5 pm. 1 May. **
Appendix A: Writing Assignments

You may do these assignments in any order. You may choose the ones you wish to do. You must write essays on three of the below topics. If you wish to develop your own topic, please consult with me first.

Your essays should provide basic information about the film (title, date, director, lead actors). I will not repeat this throughout each essay description.

Your essay must include a thesis and evidence from the films to support it. Your essay must also evidence your internalization of Corrigan’s interpretation of film analysis. I encourage you to be creative as well as critical.

The maximum word count (including notes but excluding the cover page) is 3,500 words. Use 12-point Times New Roman Font, double spaced pages, 1-inch margins all around and should apply careful and consistent source citations methods. (See appendix for an example of citation methods).

Each essay is 33.3% (or one third of your grade).

Please refer to Appendix B for tips on how to draft a well-crafted essay, Appendix C for grading rubrics and Appendix D for a suggested citation method.

1. Critical Essay on Heroism

Select two films that either depict the same country’s war experiences in different theatres (e.g. the British in South Asia and in Africa; an American film about the US wars in Viet Nam and Afghanistan; a French film about France’s wars in Viet Nam or Algeria; etc.) or that depict two different countries’ experiences in the same war (e.g. American, Vietnamese or Korean films about the Viet Nam war; American and Russian films about the war in Afghanistan; etc.). Be sure to justify your selection in your essay.

Develop a critical film essay, according to guidelines in Corrigan’s Short Guide to Writing About Film (Class 1 reading), in which you examine a film and its depiction of heroism. Your essay should evaluate how the films depict or define heroism. How do the films variously suggest that an actor or an action is heroic?

Your essay must include a thesis and evidence from the films to support it. Your essay must also evidence your internalization of Corrigan’s interpretation of film analysis. I encourage you to be creative as well as critical. Consistent with the examples in Corrigan, this paper should no more than 2,000 words. Use 12-point Times New Roman Font, double spaced pages, 1-inch margins all around and should apply careful and consistent source citations methods. (See appendix for an example of citation methods). The assignment is worth 20% of the course grade.
Please refer to Appendix B for tips on how to draft a well-crafted essay, Appendix C for grading rubrics and Appendix D for a suggested citation method.

2. Critical Essay on Justness of War

Select one or two films that are comparable in ways that you find interesting. Develop a critical film essay, according to guidelines in Corrigan’s *Short Guide to Writing About Film* (Class 1 reading), in which you examine how a film or set of films justifies a particular conflict or means of waging violence.

Your essay must include a thesis and evidence from the films to support it. Your essay must also evidence your internalization of Corrigan’s interpretation of film analysis. I encourage you to be creative as well as critical. Consistent with the examples in Corrigan, this paper should no more than 2,000 words. Use 12-point Times New Roman Font, double spaced pages, 1-inch margins all around and should apply careful and consistent source citations methods. (See appendix for an example of citation methods). The assignment is worth 30% of the course grade.

You must select a different film/set of films than that which you used in your heroism essay.

Please refer to Appendix B for tips on how to draft a well-crafted essay, Appendix C for grading rubrics and Appendix D for a suggested citation method.

3. Critical Essay on History and Film

From the syllabus, select two films about the same conflict (two American films about the Afghan war, a British and American film about the Afghan war, a Korean and Australian film about the Viet Nam War, etc.) Develop a critical film essay, according to guidelines in Corrigan’s *Short Guide to Writing About Film* (Class 1 reading), in which you examine how your two films variously (re)interpret the past, empirically assess the films’ factual accuracy, and the message the films are trying to convey about the war in question.

4. Critical Essay on Women at War

From the syllabus, select two films using a selection process of your choosing. Develop a critical film essay, according to guidelines in Corrigan’s *Short Guide to Writing About Film* (Class 1 reading), in which you examine how your two films depict women at war. Defend your film choices. Questions to consider: are women present at all? What kind of jobs do they do? How do they relate to men? How does this film support or undermine conventional beliefs about women in combat.

5. Critical Essay on Racism and Allegory in District 9

District 9 ([https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1136608/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1136608/)) is about a stranded population of extra-terrestrials residing in a UN facility.
Develop a critical film essay, according to guidelines in Corrigan’s *Short Guide to Writing About Film* (Class 1 reading), in which you evaluate this film from an optic of your choice. Possible questions to ask of this film include:

1. Why is this film based in South Africa (ie is this an allegory?);
2. One of the criticisms of this film is that it is “racist.” Pick a review of this film that stakes out an opinion and respond to it critically using the literature in this course and insights from Critical Media Literacy.
Appendix B: Suggestions on How to Write an Effective Paper.

1. All page lengths are inclusive of notes. Follow the assignment guidance scrupulously. This is the easiest way to ensure the best outcome and failing to do so is the easiest way to secure an adverse outcome. Cover pages are not included in the final word count.

2. Proofread. Let other students proofread your papers. (This does not mean excessive rewriting which will constitute an honor code violation.) Georgetown also has a writing tutor if you need assistance.

3. Always use the active tense. This is the most accurate and least obfuscatory way of writing and often has the virtue of greater relative brevity.

Compare:

Some international organizations have criticized the US drone program alleging that it has been insensitive to civilian casualties.

Reprieve, a UK-based organization opposed to drone warfare, has criticized the US drone program for being insensitive to civilian casualties.

Can you discern the difference?

4. Be on time. In my experience, the marginal improvement of a paper does not offset the penalties for lateness.

5. All papers must be submitted by email in Word. I send all feedback electronically. Trust me: you NEVER want to see my handwritten feedback.

6. Always cite your sources at the time of using them. I frequently see students who write “provide full citation later” who then fail to relocate the source. Always, always, always provide a full citation at the time of use. Do Not Use Ibid until the final revisions. Should you use Ibid prior to this, you will likely lose the reference for any given instance of Ibid.

7. Review the university policy on plagiarism provided in this syllabus.

8. The only time you are allowed to collaborate is in group projects. Any other collaboration is forbidden and will be treated as an honor code violation.

9. Be very careful in using online sources. Do not cite Wikipedia or other online encyclopedias. Do not use someone social media feed. There are some exceptions. Oxford University Press has good online encyclopedias. If you have any questions, ask me.


11. Use headers appropriately. Too few headers leave the reader less aware of what you’re trying to do while too many will interrupt the flow of your argument and prose.

Suggested Structure of Papers (excluding film guides).

1. Title of the project (cover page with name, date, email, title)
2. Overview of the paper with concise statements about:
a. Your research question
b. The films you will use and why you chose them
c. A preview of your argument
d. A roadmap paragraph to the rest of the document. This is VERY important

3. Case Studies
   In this section you will do the analyses of your film or films. You can consider organizing this section by theme or by film or other way that makes sense to you.

4. Conclude with a brief discussion of the implications of this work.
### Appendix C: Sample Explanation of Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>100 pt.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>Brilliant and <strong>original</strong> work; nearly publishable. Commendably clear and thoroughly analytical; comprehensively supported by, and systematically substantiated with, voluminous empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>Excellent work; powerful analysis with distinctive, well-structured argument; critical and full awareness of the literature alongside masterful use of empirical evidence to support and substantiate the arguments presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Very good; fine analysis with a coherent argument, most of the most important points are developed in a structured discussion; well-substantiated with clear and firm command of supporting empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>Good; sound analytical skill shown from identification and understanding of the core intellectual problem accompanied by a clear discussion of the subject substantiated with some (albeit, perhaps insufficient) empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Satisfactory; basic analytical skills apparent from identification of the intellectual problem and an insufficiently developed discussion of it. Poorly structured with inadequate empirical evidence provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Average; little analysis and an insufficiently developed argument. <em>Some</em>, albeit cursory knowledge of the main intellectual problem; <em>some</em> key empirical points may have been identified and touched on, basic, but are anemically developed. No detailed familiarity with the literature evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anything below a C in a graduate program is a failing grade. This will only be used in calculating the final grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Citation Methods Guidance:


See *The Chicago Manual of Style* ([http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html)) for less common citation forms.

- For citations after the first full citation, do not use op. cit.; instead, use the author’s name and a short form of the title, in the following format:

4. Ibid., p. 72 [only where the immediately preceding note contains only the relevant reference].

- State or country name should follow the place of publication if ambiguous (Cambridge, : Ballinger) or not widely known (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., but New York: Knopf).
- Use standard abbreviation (Calif., Washington, D.C.), rather than USPS style (CA, MA).
- Anglicize foreign place names, but retain the standard English version of publisher’s name (Moscow: Gospoltizdat, 1949).
- Avoid extracts, tables, and paragraphing in notes.

**Notes Format**

These examples demonstrate the basic note format; when in doubt, check *The Chicago Manual of Style* and provide all bibliographic information in a format that most closely resembles the following. Present notes as double-spaced endnotes.

**Periodicals and Dailies**

- Observe order and punctuation of elements.
- Include full author name and title.
- Give volume number, issue number and date, per publication’s numbering and dating system.
- Note omission of usual comma after article title ending in question mark or exclamation point.


- For popular periodicals and dailies carrying no volume or issue numbers, note that parentheses are not needed around the date.
- Authors and page numbers should be included where available.
- Punctuation of titles should be copied exactly rather than conformed to IS style.

**Books, Manuscripts:**

**Books:**

- Note order of items.
- Note placement of punctuation.
- Use the author’s full name.
- Provide full page number, that is, pp. 163-167, not “163-7”:


**Article or chapter in edited volume;** note use of book’s full title and subtitle:


**Volume in a series;** use chapter where appropriate:


**Annual;** note the introduction and use of acronym:


**Translated and edited version; multivolume work:**


**Reprint/Revised/Enlarged edition:** note “Dell” stands alone without “Books,” but full name of a university press is given:

**Paper in a series:** Note the use of IISS acronym which has been introduced in an earlier note; “Summer 1983” per publisher’s dating system:


**Unpublished paper or dissertation:**


**Government report;** subsequent citations may use U.S. GPO abbreviation:


**Congressional reports;** for testimony, list individual first:


**Archival Material**

Give the title of the cited item first and supply all the bibliographical dates necessary to permit identification and location of the source.

- Use consistent format throughout.
- Where there are repeated references to particular archives, introduce a short form for similar references in subsequent notes.

Leven C. Allen to Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 26, 1950, and memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, n.d., CCS 383.21 Korea (3-19-45), sec. 21, Records of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 218, National Archives.
Appendix

After reading this syllabus, you should be in no doubt about class policies and assignments. If you have any remaining questions, I strongly encourage you to contact me as soon as possible. Please sign the below statement and return this page on our second day of class.

I have carefully read the syllabus for SEST 710 – 06 Research Seminar in International Security and understand its contents.

_______________________________________________________________________
Printed Name

_______________________________________________________________________
Signature                                    Date