***War and the Arc of Human Experience*** Spring 2015

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OVERVIEW

This is a Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar. Such seminars bring professors together from different fields, and one of their main purposes is to expose students to some of the diverse ways in which a particular topic can be examined and interpreted. Central to this process is the creative confusion that flows when two scholars are trying to understand and to learn from one another. This course is exploratory in nature and no one, least of all the instructors, can be quite sure where it will lead. Students should be prepared to be confused at times, and to understand that the direction this course takes depends in part on the interactions among the students and teachers. It’s about learning to think flexibly about issues, rather than simply mastering a body of knowledge.

At its core, this course’s subject is precisely what the title says, war and experience. A little more precisely, it’s about what leads some people into war, while others strive to avoid it; about how war affects different people in different ways, partly as a result of the disparate mindsets they bring with them to war; and about how combinations of these different mindsets and different wartime experiences then shape the rest of people’s lives in many different ways. We will be dealing with troubling, demanding, and controversial material and you should be prepared to be upset at times. Significant political, social, and intellectual differences may arise; we are not afraid of conflict, but we do expect that everyone will show respect for others’ views, whether they agree with them or not.

Prof. Albright is a psychologist and will to some extent approach this material from his discipline’s perspectives. Prof. Petersen is an anthropologist and tends to look at social and cultural aspects of war. He is also a Vietnam veteran who continues to live on a daily basis with experiences from nearly half a century ago, and his interests in this topic are personal as well as scholarly.

A seminar by definition requires a high degree of student participation. You must be prepared to do the reading and to discuss the material we read. Your grades will in part be shaped by the degree of your participation. You should understand, however, that participation in this seminar is not meant to be competitive. You should not think that the only time to speak is when you have something new and very important to say. That is not how a seminar works. As a group of scholars learning together, we all need to hear what you think, what puzzles you, what excites you, what troubles you. The point of a seminar is to learn by speaking together; you are all highly motivated and qualified students and you should have no fears about simply engaging in our conversations. (The Latin origin of the word is *seminarium*, “breeding ground, plant nursery,” from the root for “seed”; we are nursing ideas here.) That said, you should also be aware of the absolute importance of turn-taking and time-sharing. Please try to allow others to speak when it’s clear that there are many who wish to participate, be conscious of how much you are speaking, and make an effort not to dominate discussion.

The direction this seminar takes will depend in part on where student interests take us. We have prepared a reading list and a partial syllabus. We expect to modify our plans as we gain insight into where the professors and class’s interests lie. We will pursue a rough chronology organized in terms of before, during, and after war, but do not expect to adhere too closely to it. Because of this pedagogical fluidity, the instructors may add readings that provide further insight and discussion points.

Requirements: Each student will be expected to make a class presentation, discussing aspects of an assigned reading or comparing several readings. Two short (3-5 page) papers on aspects of the readings will be assigned during the course of the term. A 20-page paper or project will be required as the final work.

READINGS:

**Week 1**

Introduction

**Week 2 An American War and One Human’s Experience**

Ron Kovic, *Born on the Fourth of July*

War and the Family -

Galovski, T., & Lyons, J. A. (2004). Psychological sequelae of combat violence: A review of the impact of PTSD on the veteran's family and possible interventions. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 9(5), 477-501.

Cate, C., Albright, G. L. (in press) Supporting Student Veterans: Utilizing Game-Based Role-Plays with Virtual Humans to Build Military Cultural Competency and Helping Behaviors in Faculty and Staff. *Journal of the Online Learning Consortium*.

**Week 3 Some Other Human Experiences**

*Born on the Fourth of July;* comparisons with *Catch-22* and *The Iliad*

Miyamoto chapter “Sure I’ll Join” from Toshio Welchel, *From Pearl Harbor to Saigon*

Consequences of War:

Tanielian, T. L., & Jaycox, L. (Eds.). (2008). Invisible wounds of war: Psychological and cognitive injuries, their consequences, and services to assist recovery (Vol. 1). Rand Corporation.

Albright, G. L., Shockley, K. M., Goldman, R., McDevitt, F., Akabas, S. (2012). Using an Avatar-Based Simulation to Train Families to Motivate Veterans with Post-Deployment Stress to Seek Help at the VA. *GAMES FOR HEALTH: Research, Development, and Clinical Applications, 1*(1).

**Week 4 War, Sex, Gender**

Chapter from Missy Cummings, *Hornet’s Nest*, pp. 81-114

Enloe, Cynthia, Bananas, Beaches, and Bases. Chapter 4 “Base Women.” Pp.125-173.

**Week 5 What We Should Know about War**

Chapters from Hedges, *What Every Person Should Know about War*, pp. 1-27, 71-70

Traumatic Brain Injury in War Zones

The Impact of the Afghanistan War Soviet Soldiers

Alexievitch, S. *Zinky Boys*: Soviet Voices from the Afghanistan War*.* Norton, 1992

Okie, S. (2005). Traumatic brain injury in the war zone. New England Journal of Medicine, 352(20), 2043-2047.

**Week 6 Combat, the Military, and Minorities**

Chapters from Williams, *Love My Rifle More than You*, 13-56

Johnson, “The U.S. Negro in Vietnam” from *Reporting Vietnam*, 615-627

**Week 7 Combat and Trauma**

Smith, “Death in the Ia Drang Valley” from *Reporting Vietnam*, 208-222

Shay, “The Trauma of War” from *Voices in Wartime*, 51-60

Herman, Judith. (1997). Trauma and Recovery, Basic Books, New York, NY.

**Week 8 Everyday Danger**

Wolfe, “Jousting with Sam and Charlie” from *Reporting Vietnam*

Petersen, “Everyday Danger”

**Week 9 Combat Today**

From Trudeau, *The Sandbox*. Tiffen, “Ambush,” 40-46

Kane, “Not My Grandfather’s War,” 27-28

McGee “On Being Home,” 296-302

Bartone, P. T. (2006). Resilience under military operational stress: Can leaders influence hardiness?. Military Psychology, 18(S), S131.

**Week 10 A Longer View**

Petersen, G. 2014 “The Possibilities of Violence and the Skills to Avoid It: On Warfare and Its Absence in Traditional Micronesia” *Anthropologica*

Heller, J. *Catch-22*. Pp. 1-55.

**Week 11 “Collateral Damage”**

Soh, “The Korean Comfort Women,” *Asian Survey* 1996 36:1227-1240

Skjelsbaek, I. (2001). Sexual violence and war: Mapping out a complex relationship. European Journal of International Relations, 7(2), 211-237.

**Week 12 In the Long Term**

“Hungry Spirits,” *Anthropology Now*

Bhagavad Gita, First and Second teaching. Barbara Stoler Miller translation.

**Week 13 “Honor”**

Mayer, *The Dark Side,´147-174*

Petersen*,* “Our Stolen Honor”

Homer, *The Iliad*, Books 1-5. R. Fagles translation

**Week 14**