

Preliminary Syllabus

Graduate Media Studies Program
War Stories in Photography, Film and Literature
6:00 Tuesday - 9:30 / 2 W. 13th Street/ Room 1204

Spring 2013

Professor Carol Wilder
Email: wilderc@newschool.edu Office: 2 W. 13th St / 1214
Teaching Assistant: Rachel Morrissey [REDACTED]

Office Hours: 3-5 p.m. Tuesday; other times by appointment
These are drop-in hours, but it is always better to have an appointment.
Please email Rachel or me directly to set-up a meeting.

Course Description:

Conflict and violence have been constants in human history, as have less noted attempts at peace and conflict resolution. *War Stories* takes a broad view of human conflict and violence with a focus on 19th and 20th century media representations when photography and film came of age. Literature, the elder sibling of these media, is considered foundational and inextricably tied to visual images. We will look at photography beginning with the U.S. Civil War, reading Susan Sontag, Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, Errol Morris, and Paul Virilio. We will do a close reading of Erich Maria Remarque's fictionalized World War I memoir *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and a critical viewing of the Academy Award-Winning 1930 film. We will triangulate Graham Greene's prescient and classic Vietnam book *The Quiet American* with the 1958 and 2002 film versions of the story. We will read David Morrell's novel *First Blood* and see its Stallone-ification in film. We will screen 4-5 films selected by the class. Assignments will include leadership of one screening/discussion and a final project (group or individual; written or media-based) to present during the final two class sessions.

Required Texts:

Graham Green. *The Quiet American*. 1955. Any edition.
Erich Maria Remarque. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. 1928. Any edition.
David Morrell. *First Blood*. 1972. Any edition.
Susan Sontag. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. Picador: 2003.

Recommended:

Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1980.
James Monaco. *How to Read a Film: Movies, Media and Beyond*. Oxford, 2009.
Errol Morris. *Believing is Seeing: Observations on the Mysteries of Photography*. New York: Penguin, 2011.
Karen Gocsik, et al. *Writing About Movies*, 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2013.

Paul Virilio. *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perfection*. New York: Verso, 1989.

Assignments:

- 10% Attendance and Participation. This includes active discussion in-class. This is a seminar, and its success depends upon the punctual, engaged and informed participation of everyone. More than two absences will affect your grade.
- 10% "Pocket Reviews." 150+/- word film reviews posted on Blackboard after each screening. Discussion item will be closed before next class meeting. Credit/No Credit.
- 20% Photograph analysis due 12 February
- 30% Project leading class through one book/film adaptation.
- 30% Final paper/project (details forthcoming)

War Stories in Photography Film and Literature Fall 2013

Weekly Schedule

*** We will finalize the weekly schedule jointly as a class. Following is a skeleton schedule that will be filled in by our second meeting.**

Dates for Class Meetings - Screening, Reading & Assignment Schedule Forthcoming

1. **Tuesday 29 January -- Introduction and Overview**
Screening: Trailers

2. **Tuesday 5 February -- War Photography: Abu Ghraib**
Screening: *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib* (Rory Kennedy, 2007).
Reading:
Jean Baudrillard "War Porn" (posted on Blackboard)
Errol Morris on Abu Ghraib (posted on Blackboard)

3. **Tuesday 12 February -- War Photography: Examinations**
Class presentations interpreting assigned photograph (in pairs)
Reading:
Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*. Excerpts as posted.
Errol Morris, *Believing is Seeing*. Excerpts as posted.

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*. Excerpts as posted.

4. **Tuesday 19 February -- All Quiet on the Western Front**
Screening: *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Milestone, 1930)
Read: Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 1928.
Dudley Andrew, "Adaptation," 2000. (posted on Blackboard)
George Mitchell, "*Making All Quiet on the Western Front*,"
1985. (posted on Blackboard)
Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema*, 1989. Excerpts as posted.

5. **Tuesday 26 February -- Paths of Glory**
Screening: *Paths of Glory* (Kubrick, 1957)
Read: *Paths of Glory*, Humphrey Cobb, 1935. (optional)

6. **Tuesday 5 March -- The Quiet American I**
Screening: *The Quiet American* (Mankiewicz 1958)
Read: Graham Greene, *The Quiet American*, 1955.

7. **Tuesday 12 March -- The Quiet American II**
Screening: *The Quiet American* (Noyce 2002)
Read: Wilder, "Reading Graham Greene," 2013. (posted)

8. **Tuesday 19 March -- *Stop-Loss* (Peirce 2008)**
Reading: As posted
Discussion: Michelle and Katie

Tuesday 26 March -- NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

9. **Tuesday 2 April -- *Waltz with Bashir* (Folman 2008)**
Reading: As posted
Discussion: Elissa, Michael, Shiralie, Sriyanka

10. **Tuesday 9 April -- First Blood I**
Screening: *First Blood* (Kotcheff, 1982)
Read: David Morrell, *First Blood*, 1972.

11. **Tuesday 16 April -- First Blood II**
Screening: *Flooding with Love for the Kid*, (Oberzan 2007)
Read: Wilder, "Reinventing Rambo," 2013 (posted)

12. **Tuesday 23 April – *Hearts and Minds* (Davis 1975)**
Reading: As posted
Discussion: Laura and Anne

13. **Tuesday 30 April – *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (Ford,**
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14. **Tuesday 7 May -- Final Presentations**

15. **Tuesday 14 May -- Final Presentations**