

FYS 100, Spring 2017

War Rhetoric

University of Richmond

Dr. Paul Achter

M-W 12-1:15 a.m.

307 Weinstein Hall

Dear students,

For most of your lives, the United States has been at war, and the many resources given and lost to war are still adding up. Whether human and physical, financial, political, or moral, war's high costs call for any state that would wage one to define it, to explain its benefits, and to justify it. As students and scholarly critics of communication it is our job to examine war rhetoric in many forms in order to draw informed conclusions about how American wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and elsewhere have been talked and written about. The US war on terrorism is a defining act of our era.

The cultural critic James der Derian argues that Americans today are part of a "Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment-Network" (MIME-NET). Der Derian's concept is a reference to what President Dwight Eisenhower famously called the "military industrial complex." Whereas in prior wars ordinary citizens had been hired away to make stuff for the war effort, World War II saw the establishment of a permanent industry for war materials, from bombs to food to kevlar—a military industrial complex that raised made going to war profitable and easier. MIME-NET describes the economic and social conditions that influence the way war rhetoric is "taken up" and circulated in American culture. It is in many ways a machine that creates revenue opportunities for many industries (weapons, oil, media itself) and intensifies the circulation of war's signs and symbols on American screens. Media organizations rely on violence and drama to generate and profits, and war stories provide it. MIME-NET is thus a new way of expressing the same warning about for-profit wars that Eisenhower sounded in 1960. How can we temper the commercial motive for going to war?

To study war rhetoric today we must also examine how war rhetoric can be wielded at home. Authoritarian leaders like Donald Trump sound a lot like politicians already at war: they create enemies, rely on appeals to fear and violence, and attempt to shut down discussion with those who disagree. Whether the topic is terrorists abroad or minority groups at home the enemies in American war rhetoric are often brown or black, and many Americans have been led to believe that an entire group of people is suspect, all of which raises a series of issues we must try to understand.

- 1) How has MIME-NET used the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as a vehicle for story lines and programming choices?
- 2) Why has media coverage and political rhetoric about terrorism so often relied on outdated stereotypes about the Middle East and Middle Easterners? Where are such stereotypes being challenged?
- 3) How does war rhetoric make war attractive to Americans?
- 4) How are media organizations in the Middle East cultivating new audiences and new subjectivities?
- 5) How do members of the American military deployed in war zones talk about war?

Over the course of the semester, we'll attempt to answer these questions by reading scholarly literature about many concepts, including militainment, Orientalism, and the rhetorical construction of dominant feelings— anxiety, melancholy and resentment—that perpetuate war.

Contact Me

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Rhetoric and Communication Studies
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Course Materials

Engels, Jeremy (2015). *The Politics of Resentment: A Genealogy*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Fountain, Ben (2012). *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*. New York: Ecco.

Silvestri, Lisa (2015). *Friended at the Front: Social Media in the American War Zone*. Lawrence: University of Kansas.

Above books are available at the bookstore. Other course readings are in PDF on Blackboard. Please bring the day's readings to class with you every day.

Course Objectives

1. We will practice the skills of description, interpretation, and evaluation of rhetorical texts;
2. We will learn to identify rhetorical strategies used to justify war and to slow or resist war, as they appear in mass mediated, vernacular, and official discourses;
3. We will engage in a scholarly discussion about the evolution of contemporary communication and war.

Assignments

Essay One. 5 pages (100 points)

Essay Two. 5 pages (100 points)

Essay Three. 5 pages (100 points)

Presentation. A 5-7 minute presentation of your research to class (100 points)

Essay Four. 10 pages (100 points)

Curation. Includes class participation and contributions to class blog (100 points)

Total: 600 points

Grading Scale

A	564-600
A-	540-563
B+	522-539
B	504-521
B-	480-503
C+	462-479
C	444-461
C-	420-443
D+	402-419
D	384-401
D-	360-383
F	below 360

Course Policies

Read the following policies carefully. Enrollment in the class constitutes agreement and understanding of these policies. Your ignorance of these policies will not be an acceptable excuse for violating them.

Grading

In-class exercises cannot be made up for any reason. No assignments will be accepted after the due date except by prior arrangement or in the case of authentic, verifiable emergency. All requests to extend a due date will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and the instructor has final say about any such arrangement. If you do not turn in an assignment on the due date and has not made arrangements with the instructor beforehand, the student will receive a "0" (zero) on that assignment. Late papers will automatically be docked one letter grade per day late. After four late days, a late paper will automatically be given a zero. After a grade is returned, students have one week to resolve questions about the grade with the instructor. Questions about a grade must be submitted first in writing. After one week, the grade is final.

Participation Policy

In this class you are expected to bring the day's reading to class with you each day. You are allowed to use electronic devices in this class for note taking, reading, and occasional class activities. Electronic devices used for texting, social media, and phone calls are prohibited in this class in an effort to facilitate our interaction with each other. You will need to pay close attention to the course readings and the discussion in order to thrive in this class.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to pledge the following statement on all assignments turned in for credit, including exams, papers and laboratory reports: "I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."

Academic honesty is—defined broadly and simply—the performance of all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed. The University of Richmond, the Department of Rhetoric and Communication Studies, and I personally take academic honesty very seriously. All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

For more information on UR's commitment to building intellectual integrity, visit:
<http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/the-honor-code.html>

Attendance

Success in this class depends upon regular attendance and participation; therefore, class attendance is required. Students are responsible for all information in the class, regardless of their personal attendance. If a student is absent, it is that student's responsibility to inquire about what they have missed. Absences due to university activities (e.g., athletics, Mock Trial, etc.) must be discussed with the instructor before the relevant class period(s). An official notice must be shown to the instructor. Simply telling the instructor that you will be absent does not constitute an official excuse. Arrangements concerning absences are entirely at the instructor's discretion. The final decision on all absences is the instructor's. Students need to make every possible effort to be in class on time.

Accommodations

If you need accommodations for learning please share these concerns with me as soon as possible and I will help you.

Tentative Schedule

Jan. 9

Introductions, overview of the semester. Key terms and concepts. Blackboard. Our blog. What is rhetoric.

Historical and Cultural Context

Jan. 11

Johnson, Chalmers (2007). "Republic or Empire: A National Intelligence Estimate on the United States." *Harpers*.

Gusterson, Hugh (2009, March 10). "Empire of Bases." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

Waldman, Paul (2015, Dec. 7). "Terrorism Truths No Politician Will Admit." *The American Prospect*.
Accessible online: <http://prospect.org/article/terrorism-truths-no-politician-will-admit>

Jan. 16

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, No class

Jan. 18

Class curator: _____

Horgan, John (2012). "Did the US Overreact to the 9/11 Attacks?" *Scientific American*.

Mann, Robert (2010). "The Global War on Terrorism: The Patriot Games, the Lying Games." In *Wartime Dissent in America: A History and Anthology*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan (pp. 159-177)

Iraq War Timeline

Jan. 23

Visitors: Veteran authors from The Mighty Pen

Bacevich, Andrew (2016). "Barack Obama's Crash Course in Foreign Policy." *The Nation*, Dec. 7. online:
<https://www.thenation.com/article/barack-obamas-crash-course-in-foreign-policy/>

Silvestri, *Friendred at the Front*, Introduction

Jan. 25

Class curator: _____

Hamilton, Heidi (2012). "Can You Be Patriotic and Oppose the War? Arguments to Co-opt and Refute the Ideograph of Patriotism" *Controversia* 8 (1): 13-35.

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Chapter 1

Jan. 30

Class curator: _____

Lyons, Matthew (2013). "Fragmented Nationalism: Right-Wing Responses to September 11 in Historical Context." In *We Have Not Been Moved: Resisting Racism and Militarism in 21st Century America*. Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez, Matt Meyer, and Mandy Carter (eds). Oakland: PM Press, pp. 301-330.

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Chapter 2

Feb. 1

Due: Paper 1

Visitor: Professor Shahan Mufti, Journalism Department, University of Richmond

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Chapter 3

—————**Ideology and War**—————

Feb. 6

Class curator: _____

Althusser, Louis, (1967/1999), "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Visual Culture: The Reader*, Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall, eds., pp. 317-323.

Ivie, Robert (2007). Chapter 6 from *Dissent from War*, "Making War Difficult" pp. 204-224.

Feb. 8

Class curator: _____

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Chapter 4

Feb. 13

Class curator: _____

Stahl, Roger (2009) "Why We 'Support the Troops': Rhetorical Evolutions," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 12 (4): 533-570.

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Chapter 5

Feb. 15

Class curator: _____

Butterworth, Michael L. and Moskal, Stormi. D (2009). "American Football, Flags, and Fun: The Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl and the Rhetorical Production of Militarism." *Communication, Culture, and Critique* 2: 411–433.

Silvestri, *Friendened at the Front*, Conclusion

Feb. 20

Class curator: _____

Hofstadter, Richard (1964). "The Paranoid Style in American Politics." *Harper's*.

Structures of Feeling

Feb. 22

Class curator: _____

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Introduction

Marshall, Josh (2016, Aug. 21). "Trumpism is a Politics of Loss and Revenge." *Talking Points Memo*: <http://talkingpointsmemo.com/edblogger/trumpism-is-a-politics-of-loss-and-revenge>

Feb. 27

Due: Paper 2

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Introduction and Essay I

Sanchez-Escalonilla, Antonio (2010). "The Popular Genres of Action and Fantasy in the Wake of the 9/11 Attacks." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 38 (1): 10-20.

Mar. 1

Class curator: _____

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Essays I and II

Spring Break

Mar. 13

Class curator: _____

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Essays II-III

Wills, Deborah & Steuter, Erin (2009). "The Soldier as Hunter: Pursuit, Prey and Display in the War on Terror." *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 2 (2): 195-210.

Mar. 15

Class curator: _____

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Conclusion

Achter, P.J. (2016). "Rhetoric and the Permanent War." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 102 (1): 1-16.

Mar. 20

Class curator: _____

Silvestri, Lisa (2013). "Surprise Homecomings and Vicarious Sacrifices." *Media, War & Conflict* 6 (2): 101-115.

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

Mar. 22

Adelman, Rebecca A. (2009). Sold(i)ering Masculinity: Photographing the Coalition's Male Soldiers. *Men and Masculinities* 11 (3): 259-285.

Berger, Eva & Naaman, Dorit (2011). "Combat Cuties: Photographs of Israeli Women Soldiers in the Press Since the 2006 Lebanon War." *Media, War & Conflict* 4 (3): 269-286.

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

Mar. 27

Due: Paper 3

Tentative visitors: American veterans and authors from *The Mighty Pen*

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

—————**Al Jazeera and Global Media Flows**—————

Mar. 29

Class curator: _____

Kaufer, David and Mohammed Al-Malki, Amal (2009). "The War on Terror through Arab-American Eyes: The Arab-American Press as a Rhetorical Counterpublic." *Rhetoric Review* 28 (1): 47-65.

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

Apr. 3

Class curator: _____

Sakr, Naomi (2007). "Challenger or Lackey? The Politics of News on Al Jazeera." From *Media on the Move: Global Flow and Contra-Flow*, Daya Kishan Thussu, Ed., pp. 116-132.

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

Apr. 5

Class curator: _____

Kumar, Deepa (2010). "Framing Islam: The Resurgence of Orientalism During the Bush II Era." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 34 (3): 254-277.

El-Nawawy, Mohammed and Powers, Shawn (2010). Al-Jazeera English: A Conciliatory Medium In a Conflict-Driven Environment? *Global Media and Communication* 6 (1-24).

Apr. 10

TBA

Apr. 12

presentations

Apr. 17

presentations

Apr. 19

Presentations

April 27

Paper Four is due in my inbox at 2 p.m.

Supplemental Readings and Data of Interest

- Baudrillard, Jean (1995). *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Blair, Carole, Jeppeson, Marsha S, & Pucci Jr., Enrico (1991). "Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial As Prototype." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77: 263-288.
- Brady, Sarah (2012). *Performance, Politics and the War on Terror: "Whatever it Takes."* New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Chouliaraki, Lilie (2006). *The Spectatorship of Suffering*. London: Sage.
- Chouliaraki, Lilie (2009). "Witnessing War: Economies of Regulation in Reporting War and Conflict." *The Communication Review* 12, pp. 215-226.
- Cox, Anne Marie (2016, August 2) "Guess Which Party Loves the Military Now?" *Rolling Stone*.
- Enloe, Cynthia (1990). *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Enloe, Cynthia (2007). *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Frank, Arthur W. (1995). *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Franklin, H. Bruce (2000). *Vietnam and Other American Fantasies*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Gronnvoll, Marita (2010). *Media Representations of Gender and Torture Post-9/11*. New York: Routledge Press.
- Grossman, Dave (1995/2014) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. Little, Brown and Company.
- Hallin, Daniel C. (1986). *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hedges, Chris (2002). *War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Institute for Economics and Peace (2015). "Global Terrorism Index: Measuring and Understanding The Impact of Terrorism. Accessible online: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>
- Ivie, Robert (2007). *Dissent from War*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Ivie, Robert L. (2005). *Democracy and America's War on Terror*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Jarvis, Christina S. (2004). *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity During World War II*. Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Jeffords, Susan and Rabinovitz, Lauren (1994). *Seeing Through the Media: The Persian Gulf War*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

- King, Martin Luther (1967) *Beyond Vietnam: A Time To Break Silence*. Available online: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkatimetobreaksilence.htm>
- Lakoff, George (2001) "Metaphors of terror: The power of images."
- McCain, John and Jeff Flake (2015) "Tackling Paid Patriotism: A Joint Oversight Report" accessed online: http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/12de6dcb-d8d8-4a58-8795-562297f948c1/tackling-paid-patriotism-oversight-report.pdf
- Munday, Lisa (2012). *American Militarism and Anti-Militarism in Popular Media, 1945-1970*. Jefferson NC: McFarland Press.
- Robbins, Bruce (2012) *Perpetual War: Cosmopolitanism From the Viewpoint of Violence*. Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Rothe, Anne (2011). *Popular Trauma Culture: Selling the Pain of Others in the Mass Media*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Said, Edward (1981/1997). *Covering Islam: How the Media and Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Top 100 Arms Producers in the World: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/mar/02/arms-sales-top-100-producers> spreadsheet with more details: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pPk2Rk4TWc6_u0IFvfts5kLo0Ad-zy_NsBMIsSDW2N0/edit#gid=1
- Singer, P.W. (2009). *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century*. London: Penguin Books.
- Sontag, Susan (2003). *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador.
- Sturken, Marita (1997). *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, The AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Vidino, Lorenzo and Hughes, Seamus (2015). *ISIS in America: From Retweets to Raqqa*. George Washington Program on Extremism. Accessible online: <https://cchs.gwu.edu/sites/cchs.gwu.edu/files/downloads/ISIS%20in%20America%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf>