

RHCS 490, Spring 2018

Senior Capstone

Rhetoric and Terrorism

MW, 9-10:15 (group 1, Jepson 106)

MW, 10:30-11:45 (group 2, Ryland 421)

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 military operations 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 from their usual work 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 made going to war profitable and easier and raised new, concerning ethical issues.

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 it can be wielded at home. Figures 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 demagogues lead us to believe that an entire group of people is suspect, all of which raises a series of issues we must try to understand. Why is it difficult, for example, to call racists like Dylann Roof "terrorists?" What is a terrorist?

- 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 racist 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 are the bodies of warriors, both terrorists and American troops, made and unmade as rhetorical subjects?

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

Achter
402D Weinstein Hall
Rhetoric and Communication Studies
pachter@richmond.edu
804-269-1261
*office hours by appointment

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.

The above books are available online. Other course readings are in PDF on Blackboard.

Class blog: <http://blog.richmond.edu/rhetoric-terrorism>

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 rhetoric and terrorism including the concepts of the human body, constitutive rhetoric, public emotions, orientalism, white nationalism, and more.

Assignments

Essay One. 5 pages (100 points)

Essay Two. 5 pages (100 points)

Essay Three. 5 pages (100 points)

Presentation. An 8-10 minute presentation of your research (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. 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

WEEK 1

Jan. 17

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

Historical and Cultural Context

Week 2

Jan 22-24

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*. Retrieved from <http://prospect.org/article/terrorism-truths-no-politician-will-admit>

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

Week 3

Jan 29-31

Class curator: _____

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/>

Astore, William (2015, February 1). "War is the new normal: 7 Deadly Reasons Why America's Wars Persist." *Alternet*. Retrieved online: <https://www.alternet.org/world/war-new-normal-7-deadly-reasons-why-americas-wars-persist>

"America's Forever Wars." (2017, October 22). Editorial. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://nyti.ms/2zvavlg>

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.

Week 4

Feb. 5-7

Due: Paper 1

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.

Baker, Peter (2016, January 11). "Balancing Terror and Reality in the State of the Union Address." *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://nyti.ms/1OMfLF0>

Visitor: TBA

Ideology and War

Week 5

Feb. 12-14

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.

Biesecker, Barbara A. (2002). Remembering WWII: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the turn of the 21st Century. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (4), 393-409.

Dawson, Mike and Chris Hayes, (2018, January 10). "The Good War: How America's Infatuation with WWII has Eroded Our Conscience." Retrieved from <https://thenib.com/the-good-war>

Hayes, Chris (2006, Sept. 8). "The Good War on Terror." <https://chrishayes.org/articles/the-good-war-on-terror/>

Week 6

Feb. 19-21

Class curator: _____

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

Michael Paul Vicaro (2016) Deconstitutive rhetoric: The destruction of legal personhood in the Global War on Terrorism, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 102:4, 333-352

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.

Visitor: TBA (Emma Brown, Tufts University)

Structures of Feeling

Week 7 Feb. 26-28

Class curator: _____

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

Biesecker, Barbara. (2007). "No Time for Mourning: The Rhetorical Production of the Melancholic Citizen-Subject in the War on Terror." *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 40, (1): 147- 169.

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Introduction

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

Week 8 Mar. 5-7

Due: Paper 2

Class curator: _____

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

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.

Engle Karen J. (2007). "Putting Mourning to Work: Making Sense of 9/11." *Theory Culture Society* 24 (1): 61-88.

Spring Break

Week 9 Mar. 19-21

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.

Sass, W. O. and Rachel Hall (2016). "Restive peace: Body bags, casket flags, and the pathologization of dissent." *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 19 (2), 177-208

Week 10

Mar. 26-28

Class curator: _____

Engels, *Politics of Resentment*, Conclusion

Crane-Seeber, J. P. (2016). "Sexy warriors: The politics and pleasures of submission to the state." *Critical Military Studies* 2, (1-2), 41-55.

Achter, P. (2010). "Unruly bodies: The rhetorical domestication of twenty-first century veterans of war." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 96 (1), 46-68

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

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

Week 11

Apr. 2-4

Due: Paper 3

Class curator: _____

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.

Knudson, Laura (2009). "Cindy Sheehan and the Rhetoric of Motherhood: A Textual Analysis." *Peace & Change* 34 (2): 164-183.

Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*

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

Week 12

Apr. 9-11

Class curator: _____

Kaufert, 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*

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*

Week 13

Apr. 16-18

Class curator: _____

Michael J. Lee (2017). "Us, them, and the war on terror: reassessing George W. Bush's rhetorical legacy," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 14:1, 3-30, DOI: 10.1080/14791420.2016.1257817

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).

Carney, Z. H. & Mary E. Stuckey (2016). "The world as the American frontier: Racialized presidential war rhetoric." *Southern Communication Journal* 80 (3), 163-188

Week 14

Apr. 23-25

Presentations

May 1 by 5 p.m.—final paper due

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_u0IFvfts5kLoAd-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>