SPR 2014 WRTG 3020: The Language of War
MWF 9-9:50am HLMS 104

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Office Hours: MWF 10-10:45, M 1-2pm, T 10:45-12, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This is a writing course based on the culture of war, with a focus on the rhetorical strategies and language used on both sides of the issue. You DO NOT have to have any current or past connection to the military to do well in this class. Our primary concern is to consider how literary forms and genres have developed to make sense of the twentieth century's mass wars, how wars are remembered and forgotten, and how war has been adapted to the dominant aesthetic and cultural movements of the century. As upper classmen and women, you have probably experienced very little peace during your lifetime. The bulk of our readings will center on modern American wars starting with WWI and moving through the first Persian Gulf War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and will discuss both sides of the conflicts. We will even discuss our future conflicts through speculative fiction for World War III, dystopian futures, etc. Issues of national identity, memory, gender, irony, and protest, will be at the forefront of our inquiry. We will read both combatant and civilian writers, and our readings will be drawn from a variety of genres, including fiction, poetry, memoir, film, cultural studies, and theory. This is a writing workshop, so there will be particular attention paid to differing approaches to specific genres, careful craft techniques, and revision strategies for your own writing development.

Each week we will explore a broad topic, applying certain concepts to the literature of the time. We will write extensively and sophisticatedly about the following topics: conventional war language and its undermining; the body in pain; the language(s) of protest; masculinity resplendent and masculinity under siege; commemoration and memorialization; the problem of mental disease (shell shock, post-traumatic stress disorder); reporting, propaganda, and the press; experimental forms for representing war (absurdism, black humor). This is a course meant to get you to think beyond the emotional response to literature of war—what social issues were at play in the literature? How did the craft of the piece dictate the content, etc. Yes, I will be expecting you to use those big ole brains!

TEXTS: Be sure to buy the same editions as those listed below (EBOOKS ARE NOT ALLOWED!). Journal entries will be based upon these books as well as handouts and pdfs available on D2L. All on-line course materials must be printed out in advance, closely read and explicated, and brought to class for the entire week of discussion. Don’t be silly and show up to a writing class without the books—you will be allowed to stay, but you will receive NO participation credit for the day.

- Assorted readings provided throughout the course, available via D2L.
- Bedford St. Martins “Writer’s Help” Online. ISBN: 9780312591564 (available for two and four year subscriptions)
Course Requirements (1000 points)

The majority of the grade for this course will come from written assignments. All papers are due at the beginning of class, and I will not accept late papers unless there is a compelling reason (i.e., documented illness, family emergency). Any unfulfilled assignments will be graded as a zero. Final grade percentages are based on university grading scale: A 93-100, A- 90-93, B+ 88-90, B 82-88, B- 80-82, C+ 78-80, C 72-78, C- 70-72 D+ 68-70, D 62-68, D- 60-62, F 0-62.

- **Ethics of War autobiography:** (160 points) 1000-1400 word story/memoir that will focus on a specific change to your philosophical world view regarding war.

- **Reading Response/Reflection Journals:** (240 points) A 250 word (minimum) response to one reading per week for a total of 12 weeks (out of 14 weeks, so choose wisely which journal entry you will miss) will be required as a prelude to class discussions. I may supply you with a specific topic or questions to help guide your reading. For others, you will be asked to generate your own response topic. These essays are meant to be informal—your thoughts and analysis on the readings—but they still must conform to standards of style, grammar, etc. Please post your response to D2L no later than 1 hour before the class meeting. Any response submitted after 8:30 am will not be counted for that day’s assignment.

- **Rhetorical Scavenger Hunt (125 points) or Veteran Interview (125 points) AND 5 minute Rhetorical Presentation (50 points):** The scavenger hunt will investigate the rhetoric of a current or past war, examining and explicating audience and purpose, how rhetorical strategies and persuasive tools are used for the major questions being asked by both sides, etc. The interview will be with a veteran you don’t know well, and formatted like something you would see in Rolling Stone. The five-seven minute presentation will try to introduce and inform peers in the class of what you have learned.

- **Final Group Research Project:** (325 points—as distributed below) The final group research project assignment involves several parts, and will begin during the middle of the semester, so plan to devote a large amount of time to the project. The class will break into groups and each group will identify an issue to investigate. The parts of the project will include: identifying stakeholders (human and non-human); preparing a bibliography of credible sources; writing an individual article response (400-700 word); an in-class panel discussion; an individual ~2250-2400 maximum word research paper and a 500-600 word minimum individual reflective essay that synthesizes what you have learned over the course of the semester with the specific issue examined.
  - War Research Article Response (NA points)
  - Group Panel Presentation (65 points)
  - Research Paper (240 points)
  - Reflective Essay (required for full credit for this project, 20 points)
  - Annotated Bibliography (required for full credit for this project, no points)

- **Participation/Quiz (50pts) and Peer Review (50pts) (Total 100 points):** Announced and unannounced quizzes will cover materials raised in lecture/discussion and test knowledge of the assigned texts. This grade will be figured with peer reviews, quizzes, preparation, attendance, etc. Think of it as all the intangibles of the class. See
STRUCTURE OF THE SEMINAR: By definition, a seminar is “a course of specialized graduate or undergraduate study under faculty supervision, in which ideas, approaches, and advances are regularly shared among participants.” This seminar will rely on students to critically and creatively examine issues raised by the literature. The focus will be on meaningful interaction between everyone in the class. Students must learn to trust their interpretation of the literature, realize that what a text suggests to one reader may be very different from what it suggests to another, and the validity of an argument depends largely on its supporting evidence and the manner in which that evidence is presented. In addition, promptness is expected and appreciated. Your attendance is essential to your successful contribution to the class discussions.

PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS: All three formal writing assignments will be peer reviewed before the final draft is due. A complete and thoughtful draft of the assignment is required in order to participate in these peer review sessions. There are no make-up options for this assignment; meet your deadlines, bring in the required number of copies, and participate for credit. You may earn credit by offering feedback to peers and offering a well-formed, complete draft for your peers to comment upon. These sessions will involve writing some suggestions and notes on your peer’s drafts, but will also consist of intelligent, detailed discussions about each draft we workshop. We will have two peer review sessions for Paper #1, two for Project #2, and three or four for Paper #3 (we will do the first half of the Research Paper one day and the second half on another day). If you don’t bring in a copy of your paper for workshop, you will have 5% deducted from your final paper grade. Each peer review workshop will be added up for points.

ATTENDANCE: A substantial part of your grade relies upon consistent class attendance and participation in seminar. Attendance will be taken every meeting time, and if you do not have the texts for the class, you will be considered absent. The WRTG 3020 course policy allows students to miss four classes without automatic penalty (though missing classes for any reason is discouraged and guarantees my feelings will be hurt). Your final grade will be lowered by one full letter grade for every absence after the allotment of four. Simply filling a seat in this course is not considered “attendance”; if you aren’t prepared for class discussion (you don’t bring the reading material, you are texting while others are speaking (for shame!), you aren’t prepared to take notes, etc.) you will be marked absent. As classes will be full of insightful discussions, enlightening workshops and edifying instruction (believe it, baby!), it is crucial that you attend all class sessions. In-class activities have been designed to boost your understanding of the readings, sharpen your writing and editing skills, and offer you the essential tools to succeed in this class. I expect the class to be the site of lively intellectual activity, which is not the sound of one voice (mine), but rather your voices as you challenge your own beliefs, encounter new ideas, question our texts, welcome new points of view, and—always—contribute respectfully and thoughtfully. Regular participation during class will positively affect our collective classroom experience (and raise your final grade). Failing to contribute your unique voice will strip the class of its diversity.

REVISIONS: You are upper-class students. The expectation is that you get it right the first time, especially considering the fact that we will workshop and draft these essays. Only in the most extreme of cases will I agree to let you revise a paper.
PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is: “Copying or adopting the scientific, literary, musical, or artistic composition or work of another and producing or publishing it as one’s own original composition or work. To be liable for ‘plagiarism’ it is not necessary to exactly duplicate another’s work: it is sufficient if unfair use of such work is made by lifting of substantial portion thereof.”

You may NOT recycle papers from other classes into work from this class--i.e. remember that paper your wrote in AP English? Turning it in as a new paper to my class will be considered academic fraud, and will be treated as plagiarism... Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will fail this course. Don’t test me on this. Everything we do in this class is measured using two different plagiarism detectors.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: Turn off all devices, including phones, before you step in the classroom. No texting, tweeting, checking Facebook, etc.—you will be marked absent any time I catch you, without warning. Let’s prove we are all above such nonsense, and refrain from doing it!? Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. (See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.)

THE HONOR CODE: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

WRITING CENTER: If you want additional help with your writing, the Writing Center in Norlin Library is a great place to go to talk about ideas, improve your thesis or essay organization, or just generally work on your writing skills. All students are invited to bring their writing to the Writing Center for feedback and advice. Students are welcome to bring writing from any discipline at any stage of the writing process. Fifty-minute consultations with experienced writing consultants are available by appointment at no charge to CU students. Because the Writing Center is a very popular campus resource, please plan to make reservations at least one week in advance. Reservations can be made through the Writing Center website or in person.

§ Improve your planning, logic, and organization
§ Refine your clarity, style, citation, and grammar
§ Prevent procrastination and writing anxiety

Find more information at: http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html
**ESL resources:** http://www.colorado.edu/oie/isson/esl.html

**DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh.

**DISABILITIES:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services at the beginning of the semester so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

**RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I ask that you contact me at least one week ahead of the date(s) that you will be absent so that we can discuss any assignments/class material that you will miss. Just so you know, I do celebrate Festivus. Hopefully you aren’t too young to get that joke, and if you are, please YouTube *Seinfeld*.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Call my cell phone number only in cases of emergencies—if you can email me your question, that would be an infinitely better solution than to call me at home, on my cell, to ask me non-emergency questions. Use good judgment—is it something you can figure out on your own? Is it available on D2L (believe me, it is!)? Ask yourself: does it justify interrupting my esteemed professor, as he sits down to watch *Honey BooBoo* with an overflowing heap of delicious chicken wings?

Throughout the semester, we will fulfill all of the following outcomes:

**CCHE CO3 Course Outcomes:**

1. Extend Rhetorical Knowledge:
   a) Use texts from rhetoric, discourse studies, communication, or related disciplines to extend understanding of rhetorical concepts to the discipline that is the focus of the course.
   b) Develop sophisticated strategies for critical analysis of several genres, for specified discourse communities. These communities may include professional or disciplinary discourse communities.
   c) Learn more sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge to appropriate audiences.
   d) "Apply reflective strategies to the synthesis and communication of knowledge.

2. Extend Experience in Writing Processes:
   a) Use multiple drafts.
   b) Hone strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   c) Learn to critique own and other’s work.
d) Use a variety of technologies (writing and research tools).
e) Learn to evaluate sources for accuracy, relevance, credibility, reliability, and bias.

3. Extend Mastery of Writing Conventions
   a) Select and adapt genre conventions for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   b) Use specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation appropriately.
   c) Control features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

4. Demonstrate comprehension of content knowledge at the advanced level through effective communication strategies, including:
   a) Ability to compose messages for specific audiences and purposes.
   b) Ability to communicate to the variety of audiences in disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   c) Ability to adapt content and style to respond to the needs of different audiences and rhetorical situations in disciplinary or specialized discourse.

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**SCHEDULE OF READINGS and DUE DATES (Course Matter Subject to Change)**
*MAKE SURE TO BRING LAPTOPS ON WEDNESDAYS!!*

**JAN**
13 **WEEK ONE**: Introduction/Syllabus
   D2L, Writer’s Help

15* D2L, Writer’s Help, Paper #1 Assignment

17 DUE: Read “Elements of Poetry” for next class

20 **WEEK TWO**: MLK DAY NO CLASSES

22* Plagiarism Exercises MLA and APA DUE
   READING: Turner, Crane, Owen poems and Elements of Poetry

24 Figurative, descriptive language, Freytag’s Arc
   Assign Presentation Schedule
   Read “Elements and Trajectory of Fiction” for next class

27 **WEEK THREE**: Fiction and Non-Fiction
   READING: George Orwell “Shooting an Elephant.” and “ETF”

29* Writer’s Help

31 1st Workshop Paper #1

**FEB**
3 **WEEK FOUR**: Truth vs. Fiction
   READING: “Baghdad After the Storm” and “The Wave That Takes Them Under” by Brian Turner
5* Writer’s Help Audience and Purpose

7 2nd Workshop Paper #1

10 WEEK FIVE:
READING: Stories from TTTC—“The Things They Carried,” through “How to Tell a True War Story.” QUIZ

12* PAPER #1 War Autobiography DUE
Writer’s Help
Topic Presentation:

14 Topic Presentation:
Rhetorical Toolbox

17 WEEK SIX:
READING: TTTC: “The Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong” to FINISH BOOK.
Topic Presentation:

19* Topic Presentation (2):

21 Topic Presentation:

24 WEEK SEVEN:
READING: “Veterans of a Foreign War” by Elliott Woods
Topic Presentation:

26* Topic Presentation(2):
Writer’s Help

28 NO CLASS (Conference)
Group Research

MAR 3 WEEK EIGHT:
READING: “Battle Company is Out There” by Elizabeth Rubin
Topic Presentation:
Workshop Scavenger Hunt

5* Writer’s Help
Topic Presentation:

7 Scavenger Hunt Workshop
Topic Presentation:

10 WEEK NINE:
READING: “The Moral Responsibility of Volunteer Soldiers” by Jeff McMahon
Topic Presentation (2):
12*  Topic Presentation(2):
     Writer’s Help

14  Topic Presentation:

17  WEEK TEN:
     READING: “Roll Call” by David Abrams and “Abram Interview”
     Rhetorical Scavenger Hunt DUE
     Topic Presentation:

19*  Topic Presentation:
     Writer’s Help

21  Topic Presentation
     LIBRARY VISIT

24th-28th  NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

31  WEEK ELEVEN:
     READING: “The Big Suck” by David J. Morris
     War Article Response Workshop

APR  2*  Analytical Toolbox
     Writer’s Help

4  War Article Response In Class

7  WEEK TWELVE:
     READING: “All That Remains” by Elliott Woods
     Annotated Bibliography DUE

9*  Writer’s Help
     Panel Presentation (alt)

11  1st Workshop Paper #3

14  WEEK THIRTEEN:
     READING: Billy Lynn’s LWH by Ben Fountain
     Panel Presentation:

16*  2nd Workshop Paper #3

18  Panel Presentation:

21  WEEK FOURTEEN:
     READING: Billy Lynn’s LWH by Ben Fountain
     Final Workshop Paper #3

23*  Writer’s Help
     Panel Presentation:
25  Panel Presentation:

28  WEEK FIFTEEN:
READING: Billy Lynn’s LWH by Ben Fountain
Analytical Research Final Paper #3 DUE
Panel Presentation:

30  Reflective Essay DUE

MAY 2  NO CLASS END OF SEMESTER