HON329:

War Wounds: Vietnam

Spring 2024

**Credits: 3**

**A group of soldiers marching on a road

Description automatically generatedA person holding an object

Description automatically generatedA group of people in military uniforms

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**Professor: Justine K. Van Meter**

**Office/Office Hours:** TBD

**E-Mail: vanmeter@chapman.edu**

**Catalog Description:**

*Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor.* Using an interdisciplinary approach and relying on Ken Burns’ *The Vietnam* War documentary as both historical account and media representation, we will address various interpretations of the global and domestic impact of the Vietnam War, from the 1960s to the present. We will particularly explore “wounds” associated with collective and individual traumas as well as social justice movements, both at home and abroad, by focusing on diverse narratives of the war and its aftermath. Our readings will raise questions about memory, commemoration, and exploitation as we incorporate various representations of the Vietnam War.

**Major Topics Covered/Course Learning Outcomes:**

* Gain an understanding of historical, cultural, and literary representations of the Vietnam War and their contemporary importance and impact.
* Understand and apply various theoretical approaches to the study of trauma, literature and culture, including Psychoanalytic and Postcolonial approaches.
* Investigate the power of narrative in the creation of notions of Self/individual/Other, community, and nation.

**Honors Program Learning Outcomes:**

* Obtain a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
* Sharpen the ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
* Understand how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
* Develop effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

**General Education Learning Outcomes:**

In addition to the outcomes specified above, this course also satisfies the following General Education areas:

* SI (Social Inquiry): Students explore processes by which human beings develop social and/or historical perspectives.
* GC/GSI (Global Studies Inquiry): Students connect contemporary social and/or environmental topics to their origins and analyze their effects on our increasingly globalized world.

**Required Texts:**

Burns, Ken. *The Vietnam War* (view episodes prior to our class sessions, according to the syllabus. Available on Kanopy)

Various handouts (posted on Canvas)

**Requirements:**

1. Readings and discussions: as you will notice on the syllabus, there are materials that will be posted on Canvas. Feel free to use your laptop to access them in class if needed, but **PLEASE only use your device for this purpose during class**. **You will be responsible for not only reading the material, but leading the discussions and presenting the material in question, so please be ready to participate each day!**
2. We will also have writing assignments at times, as seen on the syllabus, but note that unlessthese are specified as graded assignments with guidelines to follow, these are informal and can be handwritten or typed. While they’re not graded, they are an important component of your participationgrade.
3. Essay 1(200 points): Your essay needs to be submitted **by 11:00pm** on the date listed on the syllabus and must be submitted on Canvas. **No late papers accepted!**
4. Essay 2 (300 points): Your essay needs to be submitted **by 11:00pm** on the date listed on the syllabus and must be submitted on Canvas. Your presentation at the end of the semester will be based on this essay (more on this later!). **No late papers accepted!**
5. Presentation (100 points): More information will be distributed as this assignment approaches.
6. Final Exam (300 points): The final will be comprehensive. More on this later!
7. Participation/Attendance(100 points): It is more than likely that, at this point in the syllabus and at this point in your experiences in the Honors program, you are aware that your active participation in this class is necessary. We are in this together, to critically explore and examine a variety of texts, images and ideas; as such, all of our voices must be heard!

Please be aware that excessive unexcused absences (meaning absences that are not cleared with me **prior** to class and that are not legitimized by either a doctor’s/dean’s note or by other satisfactory means) or excessive tardiness will result in a reduction in your final grade according to the table shown below:

Absence #3 20 point deduction

Absence #4-5 50 point deduction

Absence #6 and beyond Failure in the class

Tardies 3 Tardies=1 Unexcused Absence

**Academic Integrity:** I am assuming that you are all extremely bright and eager students; as such, you are expected to be fully aware and respectful of Chapman’s Academic Integrity policy (as described in your Student Handbook). We will discuss guidelines regarding citation throughout the semester, but if you have any questions or doubts at any time, please put your mind (and writing) at ease and discuss them with me.

**Chapman University’s Students with Disabilities Policy:** In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Disability Services Office, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

**Special Notes:**

\*Please be aware that this is not a hyflex/hybrid course; in other words, I’ll be zooming each class (with minimal interaction with anyone who is there), but this is to be used sparingly and only when necessary!

\*If you need to discuss accommodations, please contact Disability Services ([ds@chapman.edu](mailto:ds@chapman.edu)) right away.

\*Please do not use laptops/cell phones during class time other than to access materials! If there is an emergency or circumstance in which one or both of these is required, please let me know before class begins.

\*Dr. Richard Ruppel from the English Department has succinctly explained my own policy regarding the use of AI here, so please read his words carefully:

Chatbots or generative AI tools may offer useful information. However, students are solely responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the material that the Chatbot generates in response to their prompt or AI query. It is the student’s responsibility to verify the accuracy of the information provided and to use that information in ethical ways that avoid academic integrity issues. Students should also be aware of the inherent bias that may be manifested in generative AI responses and need to think critically as they analyze the information provided. To stay in compliance with university policies on academic integrity, a student’s use of AI tools must be properly documented and referenced in the citation style of your chosen discipline.  
*The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.)****is permitted****in this course for the following activities:*

* Brainstorming and refining your ideas.
* Fine-tuning your research questions.
* Finding general information about the topic.
* Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts.
* Checking grammar, writing conventions, and/or style.

*The use of generative AI tools****is not permitted****in this course for the following activities:*

* Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
* Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

If you have questions about whether a specific AI tool is permitted, please ask me for clarification prior to turning in classroom or research assignments. Should I determine that an assignment has used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways, I will ask you in for a conference. Repeated offences may be brought before Chapman University’s Academic Integrity Committee for final arbitration.

**Grades:** Although I have listed below the point values/percentages assigned to the various course requirements, I would like to remind you to please keep in mind as we proceed that *learning* is a process, one which points and percentages are very often incapable of measuring. Enjoy the process!

**Grade Scale:**

Essay 1 200 points A 950-1000

Essay 2 300 points A- 910-949

Final Exam 300 points B+ 880-909

B 840-879

B- 810-839

Presentation 100 points C+ 780-809

Participation 100 points C 740-779

C- 710-739

D+ 680-709

D 640-679

D- 610-639

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**TOTAL 1000 points**

**Schedule of Classes**

\*I reserve the right to alter the syllabus as needed.

**Week 1:**

T 01/30 Introduction to the Course/Review of Syllabus

Th 02/01 What we know and how we know it: Write 1-2 pages – typed,

double-spaced or handwritten - on what and how you’ve

already learned about the Vietnam War and bring your page(s) to class to be handed in.

**Week 2:**

T 02/06 Hunt, *A Vietnam War Reader* (pp.1-41)

Th 02/08 “Déjà Vu”: view Episode 1 of Novick/Burns’ *The Vietnam*

*War* and bring in two questions to lead discussions.

**Week 3:**

T 02/13 “Riding the Tiger”: view Episode 2

Read Hunt, pp. 41-89

Th 02/15 Excerpts from Truong Nhu Tang’s *A Viet Cong Memoir* (pp,

13-14, 32-38, 47-94)

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

**Week 4:**

T 02/20 “The River Styx”: view Episode 3

Read Hunt, pp. 89-117

Th 02/22 “Resolve”: view Episode 4

Read Hunt, pp. 118-154

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

**Week 5:**

T 02/27 Turner/Hao, *Even the Women Must Fight,* pp. 19-38

(Chapter 1) + pp. 93-116 (Chapter 5)

Le Ly Hayslip, excerpt from *When Heaven and Earth*

*Changed Places* (pp.61-71, in *Vietnam Sampler* PDF)

Th 02/29 “This is What We Do”: view Episode 5

Read Hunt, pp. 156-192

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

**Week 6:**

T 03/05 “Things Fall Apart”: view Episode 6

Read Hunt, pp. 194-217

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

Th 03/07 **Independent Work (but I will be in class for individual**

**meetings if you have questions about the essay.)**

**Essay 1 Due on Canvas by 11:00pm. No late papers accepted, so be careful with this and be sure to use all guidelines – provided on both the handout and on Canvas – to avoid deductions.**

**Week 7:**

T 03/12 Meet with cp; Read Lucks, “The Vietnam War and Black

Power: The Deepening Divide, 1966”

Th 03/14 “The Veneer of Civilization”: view Episode 7

Todd, “A Vietnam Veteran Crosses the Line Into Canada”

Turner, “The Vietnam War Deserters”

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

**Week 8:**

T 03/19

**Spring Break (NO CLASSES)**

Th 03/21

**Week 9**:

T 03/26 “The History of the World”: view Episode 8

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

Th 03/28 O’Brien, “The Things They Carried” and Marlantes, excerpt

from *What it is Like to Go to War*

**Week 10:**

T 04/02 “A Disrespectful Loyalty”: view Episode 9

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

Th 04/04  Meet with Jack Horner; read his work, “Fear For the

Corporate Self”

**Week 11:**

T 04/09 “The Weight of Memory”: view Episode 10

Read Hunt, pp. 218-235

Bring in two questions to lead discussions.

Th 04/11 Read Hunt, pp. 235-241

Truong Nhu Tang (A *Viet Cong Memoir*), pp. 297-304 +

“The Most Important Legacy” PDF

**Week 12:**

T 04/16 Carvalho, “War Hurts: Vietnam Movies and the Memory of a

Lost War” (PDF)

Accomondo, “The Vietnam War on Film” (link:

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/arts-culture/2015/04/29/vietnam->

war-film

Th 04/18 Foley, “There is No Single Lie in War (Films)” (PDF)

Daddis, “What Not to Learn From Vietnam” (PDF)

West, “The Vietnam War Documentary: Doom And Despair”

(PDF)

Moyar, “What Ken Burns Omit”

**Week 13:**

T 04/23 **Writing Workshop (in class)**

Th 04/25Independent work (no class)

**Essay 2 DUE by 11:00pm via**

**Canvas. No late papers accepted! Be sure to use all guidelines!**

**Week 14:**

T 04/30 Presentations

Th 05/02 Presentations

**Week 15:**

T 05/07 Presentations

Th 05/09 Presentations

**Final Exam: Friday 05/17 (due on Canvas by 11:00pm). NOTE: The due date is firm, meaning that no late papers will be accepted!**