

# Syllabus: 407 Psychology of War

updated 28 March

Psy 407, Spring 2013, Tuesdays Noon-2:50, Straub 143

CRN 35854, 3 credits

Professor	Office	E-mail	Phone	Office Hours
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**Course Goals:** To think more deeply about psychological issues related to war, to identify and explore questions related to these issues, and to consider how psychological research might provide information relevant to these questions.

**Course Description:** I define war as organized intergroup aggression undertaken by bands, tribes, nations, and other large or small groups against members of other groups. The course focuses on (1) the underlying psychology that both predisposes and deters human beings from group sanctioned killing, (2) the psychological transformation of ordinary people into soldiers; (3) the psychological experience of being in or at war, and (4) the psychological consequences of war. Student teams will help plan and co-lead many of the classes. We will watch some documentary films about people's experiences in war, and guest speakers will share their experiences. The course format will emphasize discussion, exploration, and questioning. In addition to scholarly articles and chapters, we will read three books, written by a sniper in Vietnam, a Navy psychologist deployed to Iraq, and a survivor of the Rwandan genocide.

**Writing:** Assignments consist of short written responses and commentary on the readings for the week, plus a special report for the week your student team acts as discussion leader. (More detail is provided on page 4.) Strunk & White's *The Elements of Style* can help you write concise, precise sentences. Review their rules of usage and principles of composition at <http://www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/strunk/index.html>

**Athletes , Learning Disabilities, Other Special Circumstances:** Contact me right away (first week of class) if you have been diagnosed with a learning disability (confirmed by the Academic Learning Center) or have some other special needs (such as needing to travel for games as a member of a UO sports team) that may require adjustments.

## Class Requirements and Activities:

**1. Readings.** Books are at UO Bookstore and on reserve at Knight Library. Other readings (chapters, articles) will be posted on Blackboard. In the order assigned, the books are:

Henderson, C. (1986) *Marine Sniper: 93 Confirmed Kills*. New York, N.Y. : Berkley Books.

Kraft, H.S. (2007). *Rule number two: Lessons I learned in a combat hospital*. New York: Little Brown & Co.

Ilibagiza, I. (2006). *Left to tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan holocaust*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House.



We will also be reading selections from the following books:

- Beah, I. (2007). *A Long Way Gone*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Grossman, D. (1995). *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Hatzfeld, J. (2005). *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Keeley, L. H. (1997). *War before Civilization: the Myth of the Peaceful Savage*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kleinman, A. (2006). *What Really Matters: Living a Moral Life Amidst Uncertainty and Danger*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lagouranis, T. (2007). *Fear up harsh : An Army interrogator's dark journey through Iraq*. New York, NY : NAL Caliber.
- Marshall, S.L.A. (1947/2000). *Men under fire: The problem of battle command*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Potts, M., & Hayden, T. (2008). *Sex and war: How biology explains warfare and terrorism and offers a path to a safer world*. Dallas, TX: Benbella Books.
- Shay, J. (1994). Ch. 5, Berserk, pp. 77-99. *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat trauma and the undoing of character*. New York: Scribner.
- Smith, D. L. (2007). *The most dangerous animal: Human nature and the origins of war*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Tick, E. (2005). *War and the soul: Healing our nation's veterans from post-traumatic stress disorder*. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Turse, N. (2013). *Kill anything that moves: The real American war in Vietnam*. New York, NY: Metropolitan Books.
- Wrangham, R., & Peterson, D. (1996). *Demonic Males: Apes and the origins of human violence*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Zumwalt, J. G. (2010). *Bare feet iron will: Stories from the other side of Vietnam's battlefields*. Jacksonville, FL: Fortis.

## **Week 1: April 2. Introduction: The Moral Complexity of War**

*Readings:*

*Marine Sniper*, Chs. 1-4, pp. 1-58.

Blake, J. (2013, March 9). *Two enemies discover a 'higher call' in battle*. Retrieved from [http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/09/living/higher-call-military-chivalry/index.html?hpt=hp\\_c1](http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/09/living/higher-call-military-chivalry/index.html?hpt=hp_c1)

Selection from Zumwalt (2010), Section 4, Patience, pp. 125-135.

## **Week 2: April 9. The Prehistory of Coalitional Killing**

*Readings:*

*Marine Sniper*, Chs. 5-13, pp. 59-185.

Wrangham & Peterson (1996). Ch. 9, Legacies, pp. 173-199.

Keeley (1997). Ch. 2, The dogs of war: The prevalence and importance of war, pp. 25-39.

**Week 3: April 16. The Psychological Impact of Killing**

Guest From Iraq: Awab Al-Rawe

*Readings:*

*Marine Sniper*, Rest of the book

Selections on Nonfirers and Killing Ranges, Grossman (1995). Pp. 17-39; 111-137.

Selections from Hatzfeld (2005). Pp. 17-35, 47-51, 60-70.

**Week 4: April 23 Dealing with Casualties**

Guest From Iraq: Awab Al-Rawe

*Readings:*

Kraft, *Rule number two*, pp. 1-95.

Selection on psychiatric casualties, Grossman (1995). Pp. 43-82.

Selection on medical treatment, Zumwalt (2010). Pp. 45-61.

**Week 5: April 30 Solidarity and Disintegration***Readings:*

Kraft, *Rule number two*, pp. 98-187.

Selection from Shay (1994). Ch. 5, Berserk, pp. 77-99.

Selection from Marshall (1947/2000). Ch. 12, Men under fire, pp. 179-184.

Shils, E. A. & Janowitz, M. (1948), Cohesion and disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II, *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 12 (2), 280-315.

**Week 6: May 7 Hidden Battles**

*Hidden Battles* movie

*Readings:*

Kraft, *Rule number two*, rest of the book.

Selection from Kleinman (2006). Ch 2, Winthrop Cohen. pp. 27-45.

**Week 7: May 14 Atrocious Behavior**

Movie clip from *The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo*

*Readings:*

Selection from Smith (2007). Ch. 10: Predators, prey and parasites, pp. 183-211.

Selection from Turse (2013). Ch. 5: Unbounded misery, pp. 144-191.

Selection from Lagouranis & Mikaelian (2007). Chs. 9-11, pp. 81-111.

**Week 8: May 21 Children in War**

Guest from Congo: Yves Bemba Kitsoro

Movie clip from *A Child's Century of War*

*Readings:*

Ilibagiza, *Left to tell*, Chs. 1-3.

Selection from Zumwalt (2010). Child of the jungle, pp. 88-99.

Selection from Beah (2007). Chs 12-15, pp. 100-137.

**Week 9: May 28 Women and War**

Movie clip from *Lioness*

(see next page for Readings)

*Readings:*

Ilibagiza, *Left to tell*, Chapters 4-16.

Potts & Hayden (2008), Selection from Ch. 6, Women and war, pp. 118-138.

**Week 10: June 4 Recovery***Readings:*

Ilibagiza, *Left to tell*, rest of the book.

Bagilishya, D. (2009) Mourning and recovery from trauma: In Rwanda, tears flow within. *Journal of Transcultural Psychiatry*, 37, 337–353.

Selection from Tick (2005). Ch 12, Purification and Cleansing, pp. 201-216.

**2. Participation.** Attendance and active participation during class are essential. You may miss one class without penalty, provided you contribute actively during the other classes.

**3. Weekly responses to the reading.** For every week except the week when you are on the special team for the day (see point 4 below) you will write a short response to the readings for the week, 200-300 words, on a **single page** (single or 1.5 spacing is fine). Submit your response by 11 AM the day of class under Assignments on Blackboard. Also either bring a hard copy to class or have your computer with you so you can consult what you wrote during discussion. Each week there will be some discussion questions to help you get started. Respond to at least one of these discussion questions, and feel free to or raise and address your own questions in addition, as long as you are focusing on psychological phenomena that you can **directly connect** to the week's readings. ***Refer to specific passages by author and page number so we can easily find these passages during discussion.*** Look for and discuss connections among readings (both for that week and previous weeks). Responses will receive the average of two scores, one for the quality of insights and connections presented, the other for the effectiveness with which you have organized and presented your thoughts. The best 8 out of 10 will count for your grade. Late response 1 point penalty. Missing response 2 point penalty out of the total of your best 8 turned in.

**4. Special report and other activities for “your” week.** In weeks 3-5 & 7-10, student teams will *post a list of 3-4 discussion questions* in advance on Blackboard (by 6 PM the Monday before class), *lead the discussion* for part of the class, and select and show one or more YouTube or movie clips for the day. Classmates will evaluate the student team's contribution to the class for the day. Your team should also prepare a special report of 4-5 pages that summarizes what you learned about the topic and identifies two important research questions that you think need attention. Your report should list supplementary readings and other resources you consulted on the topic, give links to any video clips, and identify films for any film clips you used in class. A draft of the special report should be submitted on Blackboard by 5 PM Wed on your week (this allows you to incorporate additional insights you gained from class discussion), and Holly will give you feedback on the draft by Thursday 5 PM. The final version of the report is due (again, submitted on Blackboard) by the following Monday 5 PM.

**Class point breakdown for grades (150 total)**

Attendance & participation:	30 pts (full participation = full points)
Written responses to readings:	80 pts (out of 8 best, with all turned in on time)
Lead class & special report:	40 pts (half for class presentation, half for report)

Course grades based on percentage of points earned			
A	93-100	C-	70-72.9
A-	90-92.9	D+	67-69.9
B+	87-89.9	D	63-66.9
B	83-86.9	D-	60-62.9
B-	80-82.9	N	< 70
C+	77-79.9	P	70
C	73-76.9		

### ***Ground Rules for Discussions***

In this class we will be discussing issues that arouse strong emotions, and that likely have an intense personal significance for some members of the class—because they have lost family or friends in wars, for example, because they have served or are currently serving in the military, and/or have close friends or family in the military. Together, I would like us to create an environment in which people with different backgrounds and experiences are willing to share their thoughts and feelings in the spirit of true dialogue. Thus I encourage everyone to seek understanding and listen to others with an open mind.

The focus of this course is psychology—the study of people’s experiences, feelings, and behavior in war—and not politics or international relations.

If you find you are troubled by material while taking this course, and need support or counseling, please be sure to pursue that external support by seeking out a supportive friend, counselor, and/or a social service. It is fine to draw on personal experiences to inform our discussion, but the class is not meant to be a therapy group.

### **Counseling resources:**

#### *Local Crisis Lines & Counseling*

University of Oregon Crisis Line	346-4488
University of Oregon Counseling Center	346-3227
Center for Community Counseling	344-0620