

HIS 3308

WAR AND SOCIETY

IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Professor Terrence G. Peterson
Department of History, Florida International University
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Mon/Wednesday 9:30-10:45AM GC 285

Email: tpeterso@fiu.edu
Office: DM 390

Office hours: Weds 3:00-5:00pm
or by appointment

Why study war *and* society?

War is a social activity. War shapes societies – what they value, how they see themselves, and how they interact with other societies. But societies also shape war: ideas about masculinity, gender, race, and class all inform military culture and practice on and off the battlefield. Conflict has indelibly marked societies across the globe. Studying war and its impact can provide new insights into the history of the 20th century.

Beginning with the Great War and continuing through the present day, this course will examine war and society thematically around topics such as masculinity, homecoming, the home front, and more. The course focuses on international conflicts that embroiled Europe, its African and Asian Empires, and the United States, whose military might came to dominate the second half of the century. Alongside these topical histories of war, we will also study the ethics, methods, and practices of oral history. As the semester progresses, we will draw on our knowledge from both aspects of the course to plan and collect oral histories of war with local veterans and other Miami community members who have experienced armed conflict.

How will this course help you succeed?

Studying the history of war and society helps us understand the history of war. More importantly, however, it also helps us learn to critically evaluate how wars are experienced, narrated, and remembered across different societies. This course will help you acquire a conceptual and practical framework for understanding the global impact of war in the 20th century. It will also teach you the basic ethical, methodological, and technical skills necessary for oral history fieldwork. Finally, this class will help you sharpen your ability to analyze and critically engage sources and refine your abilities to communicate complex ideas in writing and in person.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- ✓ Understand and explain key themes, concepts, and events related to the relationship between war and society in the 20th century.
- ✓ Critically analyze and assess oral and written primary and secondary sources.
- ✓ Construct original, coherent, and well-organized historical arguments, both in writing and orally in class discussions.
- ✓ Use what you have learned in class to plan, collect, and evaluate an oral history of war.

This course is also a *discipline-specific Global Learning course* that counts toward your Global Learning graduation requirement. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- ✓ Construct evidence-based arguments demonstrating **both** how local, national, and transnational processes contributed to shaping a major global conflict **and** how major international/intercultural conflicts impacted the social development of different regions of the world. (Global Awareness).
- ✓ Construct an evidence-based argument that integrates multiple perspectives related to a historical armed conflict (Global Perspective).
- ✓ Engage contemporary local and global issues related to the study of war or armed conflict (Global Engagement).

How will you succeed in this course?

Attend and Participate.

Before class each week, we will read and discuss historical documents using a platform called Perusall. These readings are the raw materials for writing our papers, and your discussions will help you to better understand them.

In class each week, we will learn important concepts in the form of lectures, breakout activities, and discussions.

Communicate. Being a student is tough, let alone being a student in an ongoing pandemic. If you run into problems, don't disappear; reach out to Dr. Peterson or your writing assistant for help. I have student hours every week and I'm always available by email.

Take Risks. I don't expect you to know a 'right answer' or to know all the ins and outs of oral history research right away. Those are, after all, the big tasks we will tackle together this semester. The more you put into the process, the more you'll get out of it – and the better prepared you'll be for your assignments.

How will I evaluate your progress?

Essay Exams (30%). Writing is a powerful tool for reflecting, organizing ideas, and staking out your own positions. We will have two in-class, open-note essay exams over the methodological or theoretical perspectives of the authors we will read for class. These exams will give you the opportunity to connect the readings with larger themes discussed in the course.

I will distribute essay prompts and grading rubrics for both exams in advance. Students should bring a blue book to class the day of the exam.

Attendance and Participation (25% total). The best learning takes place in collaboratively.

Because of that, this course places an emphasis on participation. Weekly online activities are mandatory but low stakes, meaning that you will be graded less on the basis of how ‘right’ your answers are than on the effort you put into them. Participation consists of two activities every week: a) discussion of the weekly readings through Perusall, and b) weekly in-class discussion activities. Attendance is required.

Attend a global learning co-curricular activity (5%). In Global Learning core classes, students are required to complete one co-curricular activity that takes them outside the classroom. You must complete one co-curricular assignment over the course of the semester and write a brief 1-2-page reaction paper. This can consist of either: 1) a visit to a local museum; or 2) attendance to an event or lecture on campus related to the course.

Group Oral History Project (40%). Throughout the course of the semester, we will study oral history as a tool for recording and understanding the experiences of war. Each Wednesday, we will meet for ‘Oral History Lab,’ where we will learn about and practice the methods of oral history. We will learn how to prepare for interviews, techniques for conducting them, and how to operate recording equipment. We will also discuss the legal and ethical issues around interviewing human subjects as well as the impact of memory on oral histories.

As part of this training, students will complete a group oral history project. The project will culminate with student groups conducting and analyzing an oral interview with a local interviewee, and will involve several smaller assignments over the course of the semester such as writing questions, writing a consent form, etc. A rubric outlining the requirements of this project and due dates can be found below.

Grading

Grading Scale

A	93 - 100	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	0 - 59

Course Requirements

Active participation in Discussions and History Lab	25%
Attendance to one talk or event	5%
Two Essay Exams (15% each)	30%
Group Oral History Project	40%
<i>Pre-Interview Materials (10%)</i>	
<i>Recorded Oral Interview and Written Evaluation (25%)</i>	
<i>Final Presentation of Research (5%)</i>	
Total	100%

Navigating the Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed but unfortunately it has not ended. Please take the necessary steps to prevent further spread of the virus. Please stay home if you are sick and contact me to make up the work. I encourage you to mask in class.

Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct is a serious matter which can result in the failure of this course or even expulsion. All the work that you submit **must be your own and must be properly cited**. If you haven't already, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the FIU's Code of Academic Integrity. You can find it online at: <https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>.

Academic Freedom

Freedom of speech and critical inquiry are the keys to learning. Likewise, the rigorous, critical interrogation of ideas, images, concepts, and opinions sits at the heart of the historical methods employed in our academic field. In this class, you may encounter ideas and opinions you find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive. Our instructional discussions of this material are intended to be objective and further our understanding of the past. Discussion of these concepts does not imply or require that students endorse any particular viewpoint.

Resources

I highly encourage you to take advantage of academic services that FIU offers to undergraduates. They are a valuable resource for students at all levels.

The **Writing in History Program** provides assistance with papers and other written assignments, offering online and in-person tutoring appointments. Tutors have specialized knowledge of writing for History classes. For more info, please visit: <http://history.fiu.edu/tutoring>.

Counseling and Psychological Services offers limited, short-term mental health support to any FIU student: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/counseling-and-psychological-services/index.php>.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

I am committed to making this class as inclusive and accessible as possible. If you have concerns, preferred pronouns, or need accommodation of any type in this course, please reach out to me. Students with disabilities may also wish to contact the Disability Resources Center: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/disability-resource-center/>.

Required Texts

This course does not require you to purchase any books. **All** required readings for this course are available on the course Canvas page through Perusall.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 – Military History as a Window into Society

- 8/22 Course Introduction
8/24 The Great War: An Overview

Readings:

Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *American Historical Review*, 112:4 (2007), pp. 1070-1090.

PART ONE: THE GREAT WAR

Week 2 – Making Civilians Soldiers

- 8/29 Trench Warfare and the Experience of Soldiering, 1914-1918
8/31 What is Oral History?

Readings:

Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (New York: Penguin Press, 1997), pages 31-73.

Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different," in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader* 3rd Edition (London: Routledge, 2016), pages 48-58.

Week 3 – Making Soldiers Make War

- 9/5 Labor Day – NO CLASS
9/7 The European Great Powers at War

Readings:

Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of Our Sons: Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship During the Great War* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002). Chapters 1 and 2, pages 17-53.

Week 4 – The Home Front at War

- 9/12 Mobilizing Society for the Great War
9/14 Ethical and Legal Issues in Research with Human Subjects

Readings:

Belinda J. Davis, "Homefront: Food, Politics, and Women's Everyday Life during the First World War," in Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, eds.,

Home/Front: The Military, War, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany (Oxford: Berg, 2002), pages 115-138.

Beth McMurtrie, "Secrets from Belfast: How Boston College's oral history of the Troubles fell victim to an international murder investigation," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 26 January 2014, <https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/belfast>.

Week 5 – Race and the Great War

- 9/19 African and African American Soldiers in the Great War
9/21 Oral History Interviewer and Subject: A Complicated Relationship

Readings:

Richard Fogarty, *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008). Chapter 2, "Race and the Deployment of *troupes indigènes*," pages 55-95.

Oral History Association, "OHA Principles and Best Practices," pages 4-11.

Jerry Lembcke, "Why Student Should Stop Interviewing Vietnam Veterans," *History News Network*, May 27, 2013. <http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/151921>

Week 6 – Making Soldiers Civilians

- 9/26 Soldiers in Society after the Great War
9/28 Preparing for Oral History Interviews and Writing Questions

Secure an interview subject and inform Dr. Peterson by THIS WEEK

Brief (1-2 page) description of your group research question due on Canvas by midnight Friday 9/30

Readings:

Maureen Healy, "Civilizing the Soldier in Postwar Austria," in Nancy M. Wingfield and Maria Bucur, eds., *Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), pages 47-65.

Jessica Adler, "'The Service that I Rendered Was Just as True': African American Soldiers and Veterans as Activist Patients," *American Journal of Public Health* 107 no. 5 (May 2017): 675-683.

Before class on Wednesday, spend 20 minutes listening to an oral interview from the FIU 'War and Health' oral history project:

<http://dpanther.fiu.edu/dPanther/collections/WAH>

PART TWO: THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Week 7 – Masculinity and Comradeship

- 10/3 National Socialism and the Outbreak of War
10/5 **In-class Essay Exam One**

No Readings – Study for your exam!

Week 8 – Occupation and Resistance on the Western Front

- 10/10 German Blitzkrieg and the Fall of Europe
10/12 Oral History Interview Techniques: Listening, Observing, Questioning

Draft Interview Questions due on Canvas by midnight Friday 10/14

Readings:

Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France during the German Occupation* (New York: Picador, 2002). Chapter 2: “Cohabitation,” pages 42-69.

Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and analyses,” in Perks Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader*, pages 179-192.

Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), “Interviewing Techniques and Strategies,” pages 103-122.

Week 9 – Genocide and Military Culture on the Eastern Front

- 10/17 The Holocaust and the Eastern Front
10/19 Oral History Technology at the Digital Scholars Studio

Readings:

Waitman Wade Beorn, *Marching Into Darkness: The Wehrmacht and the Holocaust in Belarus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), pages 92-118.

Week 10 – Sex and Sexual Violence in Wartime

- 10/24 Sex and Sexual Violence in the Second World War
10/26 Oral History Lab: Drop-In Troubleshooting

Final Draft Pre-Interview Materials due on Canvas by midnight Friday 10/28

Readings:

Atina Grossman, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). Chapter 2: “Gendered Defeat: Rape, Motherhood, and Fraternization,” pages 48-86.

PART III: THE LONG, VIOLENT ‘POST-WAR’

Week 11 – Reconstructing the Postwar Social Order

- 10/31 Rebuilding Civil Society after the War
11/2 Oral History Lab: Drop-In Troubleshooting

Readings:

Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991). Chapter I, “Unfinished Mourning (1944-1954),” pages 15-27.

Week 12 – Decolonization: Wars and Revolution

- 11/7 War and Nation-Making in Algeria and Kenya
11/9 Evaluating and Using Oral Histories

Complete your interview and inform Dr. Peterson by THIS WEEK

Readings:

Joshua Cole, “Intimate Acts and Unspeakable Relations: Remembering Torture and the War for Algerian Independence,” in Alec G. Hargreaves, ed., *Memory, Empire and Postcolonialism: Legacies of French Colonialism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005), pages 125-141.

Week 13 – The Cold War: A New Era of War?

- 11/14 The Global Cold War: A New Kind of War?
11/16 War, Memory, and National Identity

Readings:

Mary Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Chapter 3, “What Kind of War was the Cold War?,” pages 63-94.

Week 14 – War and Memory

- 11/21 **In-class Essay Exam Two**
11/23 NO CLASS – *Happy Thanksgiving!*

Week 15 – Final Project Presentations

11/28 Group Presentations

11/30 Group Presentations

Finals Week

Oral History Project Portfolios due Monday, December 5th at midnight.

ORAL HISTORY LAB

Over the course of the semester, we will study oral history as a tool for recording and understanding the experiences of wartime. Each Thursday, we will meet for ‘Oral History Lab,’ where we will learn about and practice the methods of oral history. We will learn how to prepare and conduct interviews, and how to operate technologies such as recording and transcription equipment. We will also learn to see oral interviews as a collaborative relationship between interviewer and interviewee. We will also discuss the legal and ethical issues tied to interviewing human subjects as well as the impact of memory on oral histories.

Attendance to Oral History Lab is mandatory, and counts toward the Attendance/Participation grade listed above.

The Oral History Project

As part of this training, you will complete a Group Oral History Project. This project will culminate with students conducting and analyzing an oral interview with a Miami resident who has experienced conflict. This project will require both individual and collective work in groups.

To spread the burden of the project across the semester, the Group Oral History project will involve several smaller assignments over the course of the semester, detailed below. The weight of these assignments breaks down as follows:

Pre-Interview Materials	10%
Recorded Oral Interview and Written Evaluation	25%
Final Presentation of Research	5%
Total	40% (of your Final Grade)

These various assignments will be submitted in rough draft throughout the semester on the due dates listed above, and then again as part of a final portfolio containing all the materials from your project.

Pre-Interview Materials (10%). These pre-interview materials will consist of three separate documents, written collectively as a group:

- a) A 3-page description of your research question and the historical context needed to understand its significance
- b) A set of ten to fifteen questions you intend to ask during your oral interview
- c) A consent form that your interview subject will sign

Recorded Oral Interview and Written Evaluation (25%). The heart of the oral history project is the oral interview itself, as well as your analysis of it. As a group, you will find an interviewee, conduct one or more interviews that add up to at least an hour in length, and write an evaluation. All members of each group should be present for the oral interview, and

all members must contribute to the final written document. Transcribing the interview is not required, but you must draw substantively on the interview in writing your evaluation.

The written evaluation will be 10-15 pages in length, and include the following elements:

- a) A 1-page information sheet: the title of your project, the narrator's name (or pseudonym, if preferred), the date and place of the interview, the names of the interviewers, and some brief contextual information about the interview
- b) An analysis of your research question that critically assesses your interview
- c) A reflection on the interview experience and the process of conducting an oral history
- d) Paperwork including the basic factual information and metadata about your interview as well as the consent and copyright forms
- e) A digital copy of your interview and your interviewee's signed consent form.

Final Presentation of Research (5%). During the final week of class, each group will give a 20-minute presentation on their research question, the interview process, and any insights they gained.