

SYLLABUS: Command History (512:365)

Fall 2013

Class Times: TuTh 1:30 – 2:50 p.m.

Class Location: Business and Science Building Room 109

Instructor: Prof. Kate Epstein

Email: kce17@camden.rutgers.edu

Office Location: 429 Cooper St. Room 204

Office Hours: TuTh 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Course Description: “The difficulties writers have in putting themselves in the place of a wartime political leader, who bears manifold responsibilities and carries stresses that they have never borne,” wrote Eliot Cohen of supreme command, “is the greatest obstacle to sound historical judgment on wartime statesmanship.” Difficult, certainly, but necessary: winning the war over the war, as the saying goes, is as important as winning the war itself. Like commanders, historians hold lives and reputations in their hands. This course is designed to acquaint students with, and to help them navigate, the difficulties of decision-making for commanders and for historians. While teaching both history and historical methodology, it is inter-disciplinary, drawing on literature, philosophy, and science.

Office Hours: You are very welcome to come see me with questions and comments. My office hours will be Tuesday from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m and Thursday from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m in 429 Cooper St., Room 204. You are not required to make an appointment in advance, but I would appreciate it if you could do so. If you wish to see me outside my office hours, please feel free to make an appointment.

Readings: There are five *required* books for this class:

- 1) John Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford University Press, 2004). ISBN: 9780195171570.
- 2) Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey Mansfield (University of Chicago Press, 1998). ISBN: 9780226500447.
- 3) Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. A. W. Wheen (Ballantine Books, 1987). ISBN: 9780449213940.
- 4) Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (Penguin, 1998). ISBN: 9780140261547.
- 5) Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (Anchor, 2003). ISBN: 9781400034048.

All five books are available for purchase through the University District Bookstore. If you purchase them from another source, please be sure to order the correct editions. In case you do not wish to purchase them, I have put copies of each on one-hour closed reserve at the library.

In addition to these five books, a number of other readings are required. I will make them available for download through Sakai.

Assignments and grading: In addition to weekly response papers (0.5–1 page each), students must write a short (4–6 page) paper and a long (15–20 page) final paper. The first paper will answer the following question: “Why study history?” The final paper will answer the following

question: “Analyze the similarities and/or differences between wartime command and the study of history.” No outside reading will be required for any writing assignments.

In addition to the papers, students must complete all reading assignments on time and participate actively in discussion. Be advised that it will be obvious to me if you participate without having done the reading. A SEMINAR IS NOT A LECTURE. My job is to prompt and guide discussion, not to dominate it. The burden of discussion is on you. Grading is distributed to reflect the importance of participation.

Your grade will be distributed as follows:

--30% for class participation and response papers

--15% for the first paper

--5% for the rough draft of the final paper

--50% for the final paper

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is not a minor offense prosecuted by teachers in order to torment you: it is a major offense prosecuted to give justice to the victims and to deter the same behavior in the future. (Imagine how you would feel if someone used your ideas without crediting you!) If I catch you plagiarizing—and there are tools to help me do so—I will report you. The consequences of plagiarism can include expulsion.

You can see the University’s policy on plagiarism here:

<http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/info/Academic-Integrity-Policy.html>.

If you are ever in doubt whether or not you are plagiarizing, it is best to err on the side of caution and cite your source. You should also feel free to ask me.

Other Polices:

You probably know most of these rules already, but not every student does, so I include them here for your information.

- 1) **Classroom Etiquette:** Please observe basic rules of courtesy: arrive on time; silence or turn off cell phones; do not pack up to leave before I am done speaking (a personal pet peeve); do not email or text message; do not surf the web; do not whisper to each other or pass notes.
- 2) **Challenging a Grade:** You have every right to challenge a grade I give you if you believe I have given it in error. If you wish to challenge a grade, you must let me know *in writing* why you are challenging it before I will discuss the matter with you. I set this requirement both so that we have a shared record to work from and so that I have a chance to re-think the grade before I meet with you to discuss it.

Be advised that if you challenge a grade, you are re-opening the grading process. I therefore reserve the right to lower as well as to raise your grade.

- 3) **Emailing me:** Emails to professors are semi-formal documents. They are not as formal as papers, but they are much more formal than the text messages you write to your friends inviting them to that wicked awesome party you heard about. So, in contrast to formal papers, it’s okay to use contractions; but in contrast to text messages, it’s not okay to dispense with capitalization and punctuation, and it is a capital offense to use emoticons or text-speak. Never start an email to a professor with “Hey, Prof. X...”; “hey” is too informal. Don’t forget to sign your name at the end of the email. I strongly suggest that you proofread your emails to professors before sending them. Your grade won’t suffer if

you make spelling or grammatical errors in emails, but such errors will create an impression of carelessness, sloppiness, and laziness in the minds of your readers.

SCHEDULE

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

*** READINGS ARE TO BE DONE BEFORE, NOT AFTER, THE CLASSES FOR WHICH THEY ARE LISTED***

Week 1

1) Sept 3: Introduction

Readings

- Jon Sumida, "The Relationship between History and Theory in *On War*: the Clausewitzian Ideal and Its Implications," *Journal of Military History*, 65 (April 2001), 333-54. SAKAI

2) Sept 5: Clausewitz, Part I

Readings

- Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Paret/Howard translation), Books I-II. SAKAI

Week 2

3) Sept 10: Clausewitz, Part II

Readings

- Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Paret/Howard translation), Book III. SAKAI
- Alan Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War," *International Security* 17, no. 3 (Winter 1992/1993), 59-90. SAKAI

4) Sept 12: The Problems of History, Part I

Readings

- Introduction and Epilegomena from R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*. SAKAI [pp 1-13, 205-334]

Week 3

5) Sept 17: The Problems of History, Part II

Readings

- Ditto

Sept 19: NO CLASS, PROF. EPSTEIN AWAY

Week 4

6) Sept 24: The Problems of History, Part III

Readings

- John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History*.

7) Sept 26: The Problems of History, Part IV

Readings

- Ditto

Week 5

8) Oct 1: War and Society, Part I

Readings

- Selections from Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*. SAKAI
- Selections from John Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government*. SAKAI
- Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, Chapter 1. SAKAI

9) Oct 3: War and Society, Part II

- Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, Chapters 2-3, 9-10. SAKAI

Week 6

10) Oct 8: War and Society, Part III / **FIRST PAPER DUE**

Readings

- Thucydides, "The Melian dialogue," in *History of the Peloponnesian War*. SAKAI
- Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

11) Oct 10: War and Society, Part IV

Readings

- Ditto
- Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," in *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, ed. Henry Hardy (London: Pimlico, 1997). SAKAI

Week 7

12) Oct 15: The Costs of War, Part I

Readings

- Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

13) Oct 17: The Costs of War, Part II

Readings

- Ditto
- Joanna Bourke, Introduction, *An Intimate History of Killing*. SAKAI

Week 8

14) Oct 22: The Costs of War, Part III

Readings

- Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale*.

15) Oct 24: The Costs of War, Part IV

Readings

- Ditto
- John Keegan, Introduction to *The Face of Battle*. SAKAI

Week 9

16) Oct 29: Non-violence and Limiting Violence, Part I

Readings

- Mahatma Gandhi, selections from *Satyagraha in South Africa*. SAKAI
- George Orwell, essay on Gandhi, in *The Orwell Reader*. SAKAI
- Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." SAKAI
- John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions XVII*. SAKAI

17) Oct 31: Non-violence and Limiting Violence, Part II

Readings

- Ditto
- Michel Foucault, selected pages from *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980). SAKAI

Week 10

18) Nov 5: Command and Responsibility, Part I

Readings

- Selections from Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*. SAKAI

19) Nov 7: Command and Responsibility, Part II

Readings

- Ditto

Week 11

20) Nov 12: Command and Responsibility, Part III

Readings

- John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, books I-IV, IX. SAKAI
- William Empson, excerpts from *Milton's God*, in the Norton edition of *Paradise Lost*. SAKAI

21) Nov 14: Command and Responsibility, Part IV

Readings

- Ditto

Week 12

22) Nov 19: Command and Responsibility, Part V / ROUGH DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE

Readings

- Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command*.
- Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address. SAKAI

23) Nov 21: Command and Responsibility, Part VI

Readings

- Vergil, *The Aeneid*, books II, IV. SAKAI

Week 13

24) Nov 26: Commanding History, Part I

Readings

- Selections from Winston Churchill, *Their Finest Hour*. SAKAI

Nov 28—NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING

Week 14

25) Dec 3: Commanding History, Part II

Readings

- Ditto

26) Dec 5: Commanding the Commander, Part I

Readings

- David Reynolds, *In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War* (2006), pp. xix-220, 527-531. SAKAI

Week 15

27) Dec 10: Commanding the Commander, Part II

Readings

- Ditto

Dec 12: NO CLASS, CLASSES OVER

Week 16

FINAL PAPER DUE