

Crimes of War Interdisciplinary Perspectives

**Rhetoric 165 (Con. #77925)
International and Area Studies 150 (Con. #46956)
Fall 2004
Wednesdays 1:00 – 4:00, 4 Units
Room: 460 Stephens Hall**

Instructors:

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In the aftermath of World War II, an era of post-colonial conflicts, civil wars and “Cold War,” transformed our understanding of war as an armed contest between nations states, carried on principally through conventional military campaigns waged by national armies. At the same time, as international lawyers struggled to adapt the norms of the laws of war to the horrors of the Second World War (in the 1948 Genocide Convention and the 1949 Geneva Conventions) new forms of violence directed largely against civilian populations in the context of internal conflicts threatened to render these new codifications out of date. The dawn of the 21st Century has seen yet another shift as we enter a world of “wars” without borders, state actors, or clearly definable enemies. At the same time, the international community has turned to mechanisms of international criminal justice to restore peace and order for the first time since the Tokyo and Nuremberg tribunals.

This upper division undergraduate course will use an interdisciplinary lens to examine these transformations and our understanding of the violence of modern conflicts and its affects on survivors and communities. The course will use a seminar format (enrollment limit of 17) to ensure full participation in discussions and ample opportunity to engage our guest speakers. Drawing upon a variety of texts, as well as the visual media of film, art, and photography, we will study the ways in which writers, historians, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, artists, journalists, jurists, and forensic scientists have contributed to our understanding of wartime atrocities and their affects on society. We will examine war crimes committed in modern conflicts, ranging from WWII in Asia and Europe to Vietnam, Cambodia, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, and Iraq. We will discuss the ways in which different academic disciplines and professions have tried to explain and analyze the causes and nature of war crimes (including genocide and crimes against humanity); to

document and focus the world's attention upon them through a variety of methodologies and media; and to locate responsibility for their perpetration within the complex interplay of military, political, and cultural institutions. This course is made possible through a Gabelle teaching grant from the Townsend Center for the Humanities.

Required Texts:

Raul Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews* (Holmes & Meier 1985, Paper / Study Edition ISBN 0-8419-0910-5)

Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000)

Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (Meridian, 1994)

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003)

Eric Stover and Gilles Peress, *The Graves: Srebrenica and Vukovar* (Zurich, Switzerland: Scalo, 1998)

Romeo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (Toronto: Random House Canada, 2003) (Paper)

Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1997)

Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim, *Four Hours in My Lai* (London: Penguin Books, 1992)

Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Avon Books, 1978)

Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2004)

Reference: Roy Gutman and David Rieff (eds), *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999)

Assignments:

Students are to prepare a 20-page paper on a topic related to some aspect of war crimes. The schedule of presentation of the papers will be as follows:

October 27:	5-page abstract & literature review due
December 1:	Presentation of paper in class
December 8:	Presentation of paper in class / Final paper due

Grading:

Grades will be based on final paper (60%) and in-class contributions and presentations. Students will be required to lead at least one discussion of assigned readings in class.

Syllabus

Week One (September 1)

Professors David Cohen & Eric Stover

Introduction to Course

Week Two (September 8)

Professors David Cohen & Eric Stover

Crimes of War in Historical Context

Discussion of Raul Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*

Week Three (September 15)

Professors Cohen & Stover

World War II: Europe & Asia

Film: "Trial at Nuremberg" (out of class viewing)

Discussion of Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* and selecting readings for the "Justice Judgment"

Week Four (September 22)

Professor Y. Ishida
Department of German Studies
Tokyo University

World War II: Europe & Asia

Film: A. Renais, "Night and Fog"

Discussion of Ian Buruma, *Wages of Guilt* and Primo Levi, "The Grey Zone"

Week Five (September 29)

Professor Pamela Blotner
Department of Visual and Performing Arts
University of San Francisco

Art, Photography, and War

Discussion of Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*; Pamela Blotner, "Art Out of the Rubble;" and selections from John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*

Week Six (October 6)

Professors Cohen & Stover

Vietnam: My Lai Massacre

Discussion of Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim, *Four Hours in My Lai* and selected readings from Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: A Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility*

Week Seven (October 13)

Professors Cohen & Stover

Vietnam: My Lai Massacre

Discussion of Michael Herr, *Dispatches* and Vietnamese novelist (to be assigned later)

Week Eight (October 20)

Professor Ashley Thompson
Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies
University of California, Berkeley

The Killing Fields of Cambodia

Readings: to be announced

Week Nine (October 27)

Dr. William Haglund
Director, International Forensic Program
Physicians for Human Rights

Mass Graves Investigations in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda

Discussion of Eric Stover and Gilles Peress, *The Graves: Srebrenica and Vukovar* and ICTY judgments in the Dokmanovic and Kristic cases, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

Week Ten (November 3)

Professor Harvey Weinstein
Human Rights Center & School of Public Health
University of California, Berkeley

*Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity
in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda*

Film: "Calling the Ghosts"

Discussion of Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* and selected readings from Eric Stover and Harvey Weinstein (eds.), *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*

Week Eleven (November 10)

Professor Alison Des Forges
Department of History
SUNY Buffalo
Consultant, Human Rights Watch

Genocide in Rwanda

Discussion of selected readings from Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story* and Romeo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*

Week Twelve (November 17)

Jess Bravin

The Wall Street Journal

Iraq

Readings: to be announced

Week Thirteen (December 1)

Presentation of Papers

Week Fourteen (December 8)

Present of Papers

Final Paper Due
