

Critical Military Studies

Dr. Benjamin Schrader

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Location:

Office:

Office Hours: by appointment

Credits:

Course Description

The course aims to facilitate discussions that are currently taking place in the burgeoning field of Critical Military Studies (CMS). The field uses an interdisciplinary approach in order to better understand the ways that military power works, both inside military institutions and in everyday civilian life.

Course Objectives

The course is divided into eight themes that are integral to CMS: militarism, masculinity, how military power works, embodiment, military vs. civilian, art & culture, veterans, and protest/dissent/resistance. Each of these themes will help to build a better understanding of CMS as well as help us to build our own critiques and frameworks of understanding military power. Furthermore, because of the scope of CMS, we will be able to understand a variety of techniques to connect military power to our individual lives, our communities, our nation, as well as a global context.

Aims

The course's main aim is to provide students with a strong understanding of:

- The field of Critical Military Studies, and how it fits into a variety of academic fields.
- Provide tools and concepts for the student to implement in their own research.
- Begin to form a critique & framework of understanding for military power
- Exploration of different critical lenses essential to Critical International Relations.

Course Standards

Every student at CEU has the ability to succeed in my course. The difference between success and failure in my class is a matter of attitude, effort, and initiative. There is a difference between passively listening to lectures and critically engaging with complex texts. There is a difference between regurgitating facts and actively applying new concepts, just as there is a difference between taking multiple-choice tests and writing sophisticated papers. In this sense, successful students will be those who embrace growth and hard work. They will overcome self-defeating behavior (i.e. skipping class, not reading, writing half-baked papers), make use of available resources, and turn freely to others for help.

The course will demand that its members read critically, participate actively, and write effectively. Most of all, it will ask students work with their fellow members to create an environment where ideas and arguments matter. On a more mundane note:

- Students are expected to attend every class, please let me know if you are going to miss class.
- Students should expect to be involved in each class. I will work hard to ensure that everyone's voice is heard. In this regard, more than just showing up, you will need to offer meaningful contributions.
- Papers must be submitted via email to me as a Word document on the specified dates specified. Work submitted after that time will be penalized 10% per day.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner (i.e., respect your classmates, turn off cell phones, no outside work or reading, etc.). Those who fail to adhere to these basic guidelines will be removed from class

Reading Materials

All texts will be available on-line. You will need to have a well-marked hard or electronic copy in front of you to succeed in class.

Grading Criteria

- 20% Weekly Critical Engagements (200 points)
- 30% Critical Engagement Papers (300 points)
- 10% Active Participation (100 Points)
- 30% Final Paper (300 Points)
- 10% Final Paper Presentation (100 Points)

Total of 1000 points

Assignment: Weekly Critical Engagement: Every week students will come with at least one "real world" example of something that was recently in the news and connect it to the readings. This presentation will be no more than 5 minutes and you will discuss not only what you found interesting and how it connects to the reading, but also try to figure out ways in which you can apply what you read to your own research. Each week it will be worth 20 points. You will be able to miss one presentation. Thus, it is worth a total of 200 points.

Assignment: Critical Engagement Papers: Throughout the semester, you have to write 3, 1-2 page (approx. 750 words) papers. Similar to the weekly critical engagement, I hope that you are able to break down what is being said and show how it relates to your own work. These can be done at any point throughout the semester, HOWEVER, they must be turned in within a week of the readings that you

cover in the paper. So for example, if you write a 1 page essay on Cynthia Enloe who we cover in week 6, your paper must be turned in by the end of week 7. It would be wise to get these done earlier in the semester rather than later. Each paper is worth 100 points. You will be graded on content more than anything else, however, do need to work on writing grammatically sound academic papers, so they must be cited properly as well. This is worth a total of 300 points.

Assignment: Active Participation: Beyond your weekly critical engagement, you are to also be active in discussion weekly. That means asking questions, answering questions, and participating in group discussions. This is a very subjective grade, as it is based on my perception of how engaged you are, so it would be best to be active. This is worth 100 points.

Assignment: Final Paper: This paper is to be a proper academic paper. Approximately 5,000-7,500 words. Times New Roman font, double spaced. As for formatting, you can use either APA or Chicago Style, as they are the two most used in our field of study. In this paper, you will use at least 3 of the authors we covered, break down what they are saying, and make an argument. Since we are trying to relate the concepts here to our own work, I am flexible in working with you to make what you write here usable for your MA thesis, however there should be a vein of CMS throughout, but please talk with me about what you hope to write about. Again, while you will be graded primarily on your argument and the representation of what you are breaking down, you do need to make sure that your writing is grammatically sound and properly cited, as these will be graded too. This is worth 400 points.

Assignment: Final Paper Presentation: In the final week we will have conference style presentations, where each student will have 10-15 minutes to present their final papers.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are required to be respectful of their classmates and refrain from disruptive behavior in the classroom and on campus. **If you engage in cheating or plagiarism, you will receive an F (0.0) grade for the course and I will be forced to report you for academic dishonesty.**

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student's language and style; paraphrasing a passage so closely that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved. If you can find it online, so can I. If you have questions regarding what does and does not constitute plagiarism, please ask me.

THERE'S NO SUCH THING
AS A TOY SOLDIER

With that said, many people who plagiarize often do so out of desperation. Please come talk with me if you are feeling stressed or having problems with the assignments and we can work together in order to get you the resources in order to be successful.

COURSE CONTENT NOTE: Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Victim Blaming, Stalking, and Retaliation toward other students will not be tolerated in my course.

Course Breakdown

Week 1 – Sept 4: What is Critical Military Studies

Victoria Basham, Aaron Belkin, and Jess Gifkins. "What is Critical Military Studies?" *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 1, Iss. 1 (2015).

Cynthia Enloe. "The recruiter and the sceptic: a feminist approach to military studies," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 1, Iss. 1 (2015).

Tarak Barkawi. "From War to Security: Security Studies, the wider agenda and the fate of the study of war," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. Plenary article (2011).

Week 2—Sept 10: No Class, I am away for a conference

No class, I am away for the EISA conference

Week 3—Sept 17: What is Militarism

You are to read the Security Dialogue special issue on "Militarism and security: Dialogue, possibilities and limits," Volume 49, Issue 1-2 (2018).

<http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/sdib/49/1-2>

Week 4—Sept 24: Masculinity

Aaron Belkin, *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign façade of American Empire 1898-2001*. (New York: Columbia University Press). Introduction pgs. 1-18.

Cynthia Cockburn, "Gender relations as casual in militarization and war: a feminist standpoint," in *Making Gender, Making War: violence, military and peacekeeping practices*, eds. Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg. (London: Routledge, 2011)

Jeff Hearn, "Men/Masculinities: War/militarism—searching (for) obvious connections?" in *Making Gender, Making War: violence, military and peacekeeping practices*, eds. Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg. (London: Routledge, 2011)

Katharine M. Millar and Joanna Tidy, "Combat as a moving target: masculinities, the heroic soldier myth, and normative martial violence," *Critical Military Studies*. Vol. 3, No. 2. (2017).

Week 5—Oct 2: How Military Power Works (Part 1)

Tarak Barkawi and Shane Brighton, "Powers of War: Fighting, Knowledge, and Critique," *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5 (2011)

Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs*, Vol. 12, No. 4, Within and Without: Women, Gender, and Theory. (Summer, 1987), pp. 687-718.

Aaron Ettinger, "Ending the draft in America: the coevolution of military manpower and the capitalist state, 1948–1973" *Critical Military Studies*, Vol 4, No. 1. (2018).

Bryan Mabee, "From 'liberal war' to 'liberal militarism': United States security policy as the promotion of military modernity" *Critical Military Studies*, Vol 2, No. 3. (2016).

Week 6—Oct 8: No Class Fall Break

No Class Fall Break

Week 7—Oct 15: How Military Power Works (Part 2)

Joanna Tidy, "Visual regimes and the politics of war experience: Rewriting war 'from above' in WikiLeaks' 'Collateral Murder'," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 43, part 1, pp. 95–111.

Rachel Woodward, *Military Geographies*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004). Chapter 1: Military Geography, Militarism's Geographies; Chapter 2: Military Space, and; Chapter 7: The Study of Military Geographies

The war in Afghanistan has decimated populations of some of the rarest creatures in the world.

Week 8—Oct 22: Embodiment

Christine Sylvester, "War Experiences/War Practices/War Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. Vol. 40 (3) 2012. 483-503.

Synne L. Dyvik, "Of bats and bodies: methods for reading and writing embodiment," *Critical Military Studies*. Vol. 2, Nos 1-2. 2016.

Torika Bolatagici, "Somatic soldier: embodiment and the aesthetic of absence and presence," *Critical Military Studies*. Vol. 2, Nos 1-2. 2016.

Synne L. Dyvik & Lauren Greenwood, "Embodying militarism: exploring the spaces and bodies in-between," *Critical Military Studies*. Vol. 2, Nos 1-2. 2016.

Pick 1 more article from the Embodiment special issue (YOUR CHOICE) *Critical Military Studies*. Vol. 2, Nos 1-2. 2016.

Week 9—Oct 29: Military vs. Civilian

Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. 1st ed. University of California Press, 2000. Pgs: 1-34

Victoria Basham, *War, Identity, and the Liberal State: Everyday Experiences of the Geopolitical in the Armed Forces*. (London: Routledge, 2013). Introduction.

Kevin McSorley, "Doing military fitness: physical culture, civilian leisure, and militarism," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-2, 103-119

Jesse Paul Crane-Seeber, "Sexy warriors: the politics and pleasures of submission to the state," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-2, 41-55

Week 10—Nov 5: Art & Culture

Christine Sylvester, "The Art of War/The War Question in (Feminist) IR," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 2005. Vol.33. No.3, pp. 855-878

Deborah Cohler, "Consuming Army Wives: military domesticity and nationalist neoliberalism on TV," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 235-251

Jill Gibbon and Christine Sylvester, "Thinking Like an Artist- Researcher about War," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 2017, Vol. 45(2) 249-257.

Julien Pomarède, "Normalizing violence through front-line stories: the case of American Sniper," *Critical Military Studies*, VOL. 4, NO. 1, 52-71 (2018)

Week 11—Nov 12: Veterans

Sarah Bulmer & Maya Eichler, "Unmaking militarized masculinity: veterans and the project of military-to-civilian transition," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 161–181

Sarah Bulmer & David Jackson, "You do not live in my skin": embodiment, voice, and the veteran," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1–2, 25–40

Brianne P. Gallagher, "Burdens of proof: veteran frauds, PTSD pussies, and the spectre of the welfare queen," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3

Benjamin Schrader "The Affect of Veteran Activism," *Critical Military Studies*, (2017)

Week 12—Nov 19: Protest, Dissent, & Resistance

Joanna Tidy, "Gender, Dissenting Subjectivity and the Contemporary Military Peace Movement in Body of War," *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 17. No. 3 (2015)

Joanna Tidy, "The Gender Politics of "Ground Truth" in the Military Dissent Movement: The Power and Limits of Authenticity Claims Regarding War," *International Political Sociology*, Vol 10, Iss. 2 (2016)

Body of War (Documentary)

Week 13—Nov 26: Protest, Dissent, & Resistance (Part 2)

David Flores, "Politicization Beyond Politics: Narratives and Mechanisms of Iraq War Veterans' Activism," *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 43, Iss. 1. (2017)

Chris Rossdale, "Encounters at the gate," *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3. No3. (2017)

Benjamin Schrader, *Fight to Live, Live to Fight: Veteran Activism After War*, (New York: SUNY publishing, 2019). Introduction

Week 14—Dec 4: Critical Military Studies in Action

Speakers Panel

Week 15—Dec 11: Final Presentations (Panel A & B)

Week 16—Dec 18: Final Presentations (Panel C & D)

FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 20TH BY MIDNIGHT