SYLLABUS: Senior Seminar: Approaches to Military History (50:509:480)
Spring 2013
Instructor: Prof. Kate Epstein

Class Times: TuTh 1:30 – 2:50 p.m.
Class Location: Business and Sciences Building 108
Email: kce17@camden.rutgers.edu
Office Location: 429 Cooper St., Room 204
Office Hours: Tu, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. / Th, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Course Description: As the History Channel and the bookshelves at Barnes & Noble demonstrate, military history is extremely popular with the American public. It is also a distinct field within academia. Over the last few decades, military historians have become interested in questions that do not always find their way onto television or into bookstores. A field that once devoted itself overwhelmingly to the study of famous battles, campaigns, and commanders now pays equal if not greater attention to institutions, logistics, and culture, to name just a few more recent topics. In short, military history has become much more diverse than it used to be, and a gap has opened between popular and academic approaches to the subject.

The purpose of this seminar is twofold. First, it will familiarize its members with the diversity of military history. Second, it will teach them to engage military history critically—not as a simple story of victory or defeat, but as a complex human phenomenon raising difficult questions and requiring rigorous research. Members of the seminar can therefore expect to acquire a richer sense of what constitutes military history, and better tools for understanding the military history that is being made even now.

Office Hours: You are very welcome to come see me with questions and comments. My office hours will be Tuesday from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m and Thursday from 3:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. in 429 Cooper Street, 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.

Pre-requisites and Workload: This is a senior seminar for history majors. You must be a senior, be a history major, and have taken “Perspectives.”

Please be advised that the workload for this class, while not intended to be crushing, is substantial. You will be reading about 10 books and doing some 40 pages of writing over the course of the semester.

Readings: There are six required books for this class:


All six 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. I tried to select books that would cost less than $100 total if you buy them used. 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 books, several other readings are required. I will make them available for download through Sakai.

**Assignments and Grading:** 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. You must complete all reading assignments on time and participate actively in discussion. In addition, you must bring the readings with you to class so that we can refer to them. Be advised that it will be obvious to me if you participate without having done the reading.

The reading in this class is substantial. The pace will be roughly one book every two weeks. You will need to read an additional 3-4 books in order to write the historiographical essay. I may also add some very short readings weekly readings as we proceed through the semester.

In addition to reading and participating, you must also complete a number of writing assignments. These include weekly 1-page response papers; three book reviews (3-4 pp. each); and a historiographical essay (10-15 pp.).

- The weekly response papers will be only half-a-page to a page. They should not take more than half an hour to write, and they are designed to help guide your thinking about the books.
- The book reviews will be of books that we read together as a class.
- For the historiographical essay, you will select a topic within military history which particularly interests you, with my approval. You will then do additional research on that topic and write a paper which puts those readings into conversation with each other. Please note that you are required to select the topic of their essay by Week 7 in order to ensure that you have enough time to complete the additional readings and write the paper.

We will discuss how to write book reviews and historiographical essays in class. Please consult the guides on Sakai for further information as well.

Grades will be distributed as follows:

- 25% for attendance and class participation (both quantity and quality)
- 5% for response papers
- 8% for first book review
- 12% for second book review
- 15% for third book review
- 35% for historiographical essay

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** 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/academic_integrity_policy.pdf](http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/academic_integrity_policy.pdf). 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) **Missing or Struggling in Class:** I realize that life happens beyond my classroom—people get sick, cars break down, family members are in distress—and sometimes things that are beyond your control make it difficult for you to perform academically. If such a situation arises, PLEASE let me know about it as soon as you can, keep me apprised, and be prepared to supply documentation. When I have advance notice and see credible evidence for your claim, I will work with you. When I hear about things after the fact or proof is unavailable, I tend to be much less sympathetic. In other words, help me help you.

2) **No Papers Accepted by Email:** I will not accept papers via email. When the syllabus says papers are due in class, that means a hard copy is due in class, not by email attachment during class. If you cannot make a class when a paper is due, I suggest you give it to a friend and/or work out another arrangement with me.

3) **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.

4) **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.

5) **Emailing me:** Emails to professors are semi-formal documents. It’s good to break the habit of writing with excessive informality now since it will hurt you in the “real world.” Emails to professors 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) Jan 22
**Readings**
   • None

2) Jan 24
**Readings**

**Week 2**
3) Jan 29
**Readings**
   • Guides to writing book reviews and historiographical essays. SAKAI.

4) Jan 31
**Readings**
   • Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, Introduction

**Week 3**
5) Feb 5
**Readings**
   • Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, Chapter 2-end

6) Feb 7
**Readings**
   • Ditto

**Week 4**
7) Feb 12
**Readings**
   • Ditto
8) Feb 14—1st BOOK REVIEW DUE  
Readings  
  • Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, Introduction and Chapters 1-4

**Week 5**  
9) Feb 19  
Readings  
  • Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, Chapter 5-end

10) Feb 21  
Readings  
  • Ditto

**Week 6**  
11) Feb 26  
Readings  
  • Ditto

12) Feb 28  
Readings  
  • Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War*, Chapters 1-3

**Week 7**  
13) Mar 5—TOPIC FOR HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE  
Readings  
  • Finish Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War*

14) Mar 7  
Readings  
  • Ditto

**Week 8**  
15) Mar 12  
Readings  
  • Ditto

16) Mar 14—2nd BOOK REVIEW DUE  
Readings  
  • Lambert, *Sir John Fisher’s Naval Revolution*, Intro and Part I
Week 9—NO CLASS, SPRING RECESS

Week 10
17) Mar 26
Readings
• Finish Lambert, *Sir John Fisher’s Naval Revolution*

18) Mar 28
Readings
• Ditto

Week 11
19) Apr 2
Readings
• Ditto

20) Apr 4
Readings
• Browning, *Ordinary Men*, Preface-Chapter 5

Week 12
21) Apr 9
Readings
• Finish Browning, *Ordinary Men*

22) Apr 11—3rd BOOK REVIEW DUE
Readings
• Ditto

Week 13
23) Apr 16
Readings
• Excerpt from Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners* (on Sakai)

24) Apr 18
Readings
• Ditto

Week 14
25) Apr 23
Readings
• Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, Prologue

26) Apr 25  
Readings  
• Finish Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*

**Week 15**  
27) Apr 30  
Readings  
• Ditto

28) May 2  
Readings  
• Ditto

**Week 16—NO CLASS, READING WEEK**  
May 10—HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE