

**Carton**  
**E. 379S, Unique #35150**  
**Literature of American Warfare**  
**TTH 11:00-12:30 in PAR 210**

### **Syllabus and Course Information**

- Jan. 19 Introduction & The Poetics of American Warfare (handout)  
21 Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation*, ch. 9 (P) & Rowlandson, “Narrative of Captivity and Restoration” (P)
- 26 Zinn, “We Take Nothing by Conquest, Thank God” (P); Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (P); Webster, “March 7, 1850 Speech” (P)  
28 Wilson, “War Message to Congress” (P); Johnson, “Tonkin Gulf Incident Speech” (P); Bush, “Mission Accomplished” in Iraq Speech (P); Obama, “Speech on Afghanistan” (P); Waltzer, “The Triumph of Just War Theory” (P)
- Feb. 2 Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage* (complete novella, pp. 3-117)  
4 Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic* (through chapter 5)
- 9 Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic* (through chapter 10)  
11 Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic* (finish book)
- 16 Ellsberg, from *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam*: Prologue & Chs. 1-3 (P)  
18 Wolff, *In Pharoah’s Army* (Part One)
- 23 Wolff, *In Pharoah’s Army* (Part Two)  
25 Wolff, *In Pharoah’s Army* (Part Three) & Sheehan, “Not a Dove, But No Longer a Hawk” (P)
- Mar. 2 O’Brien, *The Things They Carried* (through “The Man I Killed”; pp. 3-144)  
4 O’Brien, *The Things They Carried* (through “In the Field”; pp. 147-99)
- 9 O’Brien, *The Things They Carried* (finish collection)  
11 Hersh, “The My Lai Massacre” (P) & Broyles, “Why Men Love War” (P)  
12 **Short Essay Due in Parlin 223 by 5:00 pm.**

### **SPRING BREAK**

- 23 Mason, *In Country* (through Part II, ch. 12—p. 89)  
25 Mason, *In Country* (through Part II, ch. 26—p. 190)
- 30 Mason, *In Country* (finish novel)  
Apr. 1 Sontag, *Trip to Hanoi* (P)

- 6 Fallows, “Blind into Baghdad” (P); Gourevitch, *The Ballad of Abu Ghraib*: Part I (pp. 1-65)
- 8 Herbert, *Faith-Based War* (through ch. 4, pp. 1-78)
- 13 Wright, “The Killer Elite” (P); Herbert, *Faith-Based War* (ch. 5, pp. 79-95)
- 15 Herbert, *Faith-Based War* (through ch. 8, pp. 96-147)
- 20 Gourevitch, *The Ballad of Abu Ghraib*: Part II (pp. 71-255)
- 22 Gourevitch, *The Ballad of Abu Ghraib*: Part III (finish book)
- 27 Herbert, *Faith-Based War* (finish book); Sontag, “Regarding the Torture of Others” (P)
- 29 paper proposal workshop
- May 4 paper proposal workshop
- 6 paper proposal workshop & course evaluation

**Office Hours:** I will hold office hours in Parlin 223 between between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm on Wednesdays. I am also happy to schedule an appointment to meet at another time if a student is unable to meet with me during my regular hours. The best way to reach me between classes is by email: [e.carton@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:e.carton@mail.utexas.edu)

**Graded Work:** Your course grade will be based on attendance (20%); Blackboard discussion posts (20%); a one-page (single-spaced) response to a selected reading assignment, presented in class (15%); a 1000 word out of class essay (15%); and a 2500-3000 word final paper (30%).

**Attendance and participation:** If you have no more than three absences, you will receive the full 20 points for the attendance portion of your grade. Each absence over three will lower the attendance portion of your grade by 10 points. Missing more than 5 classes will result in an automatic F for the course. Late arrival after attendance has been taken will count as an absence; early departure will also count as an absence. Regular and thoughtful participation in class discussion may earn you up to 6 extra credit points.

**Blackboard Discussion Posts:** We will use the discussion board on the class Blackboard site as a way to record our individual and collective reading responses and queries, generate discussion and intellectual collegiality between class periods, seed in-class discussions, generate ideas for longer essays, sustain and preserve threads of discussion over the course of the semester, and practice critical thinking and writing skills. I will expect each student to post **five** one-paragraph Blackboard discussion contributions over the course of the semester, at least two of which must be posted before Spring Break. Students may post more than this number if they wish, but each student must post a minimum of 5 to qualify to receive the full 20 points for this component of the course

grade. In these posts, students may offer a response to new readings, a query to classmates about an issue in the readings, a retrospective commentary on a class discussion or a reading response presented by another student (see Reading Response Presentation section below), an abstract of an idea for a paper, or a synthetic observation that takes note of a continuing theme, thread, or idea in the readings or discussions. But the form of each post should be a single well-shaped paragraph (roughly 4-6 sentences long) that frames an idea or question with clarity and adequate definition. I will also participate in the Blackboard dialog, providing examples of posts myself and commenting on the posts of others. Privately, I will also communicate to each student in the middle of the semester my assessment of the general quality of his or her posts so far, with comments on the writing (both form and content) and suggestions for improvement.

**Reading Response Presentation:** At the beginning of the semester, each student will select one class date on which to take responsibility for initiating the class discussion. The protocol for doing so will be as follows: on the day you are scheduled to present, your job is to bring to class a two to three paragraph response to the day's reading assignment (or one of the texts assigned, if there is more than one). This written response should be single-spaced and printed on one side of a single sheet of paper. Please bring a copy of your response to distribute to each member of the class. The first paragraph of your response should be a synopsis of what you take to be the main argument of the day's reading (if the assigned text is an essay or a portion of a non-fiction work) or, if the day's text is a narrative memoir or work of fiction, a descriptive summary of one important issue or idea that you have found in the assignment and think is worth discussing. The second or second and third paragraphs of your response should offer a commentary—from your own perspective—on the argument or issue from the assigned text that you have summarized in paragraph one. In other words, after the first paragraph of your response, you should offer your own critical analysis and/or personal reaction to the aspect of the reading that you have selected for attention, articulating a position on the text or issue at hand that can provide a jumping off point for the day's class discussion. You may choose to end your reading response by posing a few questions for the class that you think important or interesting to raise about the day's text and/or its place in the larger series of class readings and discussions of the Literature of American Warfare. Each class period for which a respondent is assigned will begin with the respondent reading his/her presentation aloud while the other class members follow along. The class discussion will then begin with comments or questions on the presentation by other students and by me. After the class period in which you present your reading response, please send me the text of the response for posting on the class Blackboard site.

**Short Essay:** The short essay is due in my office, Parlin 223, by 5:00 pm on March 12, the Friday before Spring Break. It should be 3-4 pages or approximately 1000 words long, and may focus on a single text or a comparison of two texts that we have read and discussed to that point in the semester. Students may find it useful to take one of their own or one of their classmates' Blackboard posts as a prompt for this essay. (Any student who has already presented his or her in-class reading response before March 12, however, may not recycle that response as his or her short essay.) Students may also find

it useful—but are not obliged---to select one of the following three approaches in writing their short critical essay:

Approach #1 (formal): A close reading of an individual text that shows how some formal aspect or element of the text—its style, its structure, a particular metaphor, motif, passage, or literary device—contributes to its signification (its overall meaning, purpose, or theme).

Approach #2 (comparative): A comparison of two texts that makes an argument about how the two connect and/or where they differ and about why that connection or difference is worth drawing, what it illuminates or reveals about the two texts, their authors, or the concerns or circumstances they share.

Approach #3 (historical/contextual): An exploration of the text's response to or position in some larger historical or social context that is pertinent to its moment in time, its setting, the community or purpose to which it is addressed, or some real world issue with which it deals.

Students who take Approach #3 should reference in an attached bibliography no less than two outside sources of information on the historical or social context (not on the text itself) that they are expounding in relation to the work they have chosen to consider.

**Otherwise, I will expect students not to consult outside sources for their short critical essay but to draw on their own insights and information and ideas gathered from the primary readings, the class discussions, and the Blackboard posts.**

**Final Paper:** The final paper on a topic of the student's choosing should be approximately 10-12 double-spaced pages or 2500-3000 words long and will be due during exam week. During one of the last three class periods of the semester, each student will present an overview or abstract of his or her proposed paper to the class for comments and suggestions.