ENGL 5020. Fear On the Homefront
The Literature of Peace and War
Summer 2019
Professor Anne E. Fernald
Office Hours M & W 3-5 & by appt. in Martino 422
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The decision to wage war is one of the most consequential moral choices we make. The struggle to achieve and maintain peace is one of the most challenging and abstract human goals. For all the ways that war and peace are tied up with politics, we can come to a better understanding of our human experience of peace and war through art. This seminar explores literary and cinematic representations of peace and war from Classical times to the present day. We look at war stories, the special case of civil war, as well as the more recent phenomenon of fear of the homefront. We end with a unit on pacifism and peace work. In every unit, we will read nonfiction sources highlighting ethical and moral ideas about war (by Abraham Lincoln, Simone Weil, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Michael Walzer and others) Authors include Homer, Shakespeare, Virginia Woolf, Vera Brittain, and many others.

Books:
Beynon, Francis Marion, Aleta Day (1919) Broadview 5/299781551113913
Homer, The Iliad (750 BCE) Trans. Fagles, Penguin 9780140275360
Woolf, Virginia, Mrs. Dalloway (1925) Harcourt 9780156030359
Brooks, Max & Canaan White, Harlem Hellfighters (2014) Broadway 9780307464972

5/29  Introduction
Anne Fernald, “What is War?”
Necati Polat, “Peace as War”
Viet Thanh Nguyen, “Just Memory,” from Nothing Ever Dies

6/3  Francis Marion Beynon, Aleta Day (1919)
Vera Brittain, from England’s Hour “Memorial Service for Civilisation” and “And So—Farewell!”; from Testament of Youth (1933)
Jean Bethke Elshtain “Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism, Just war, and Feminism in a Nuclear Age”
John Horgan “Choosing Peace”

6/5  Virginia Woolf Mrs. Dalloway (1925)
Virginia Woolf, “Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid” (1940)
Paul Saint-Amour, Tense Future (excerpt)

6/10 Max Brooks & Canaan White, Harlem Hellfighters (2014)
Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*

William James, “The Moral Equivalent of War”
Michael Walzer, “The Moral Reality of War”

Emily Dickinson, “I many times thought peace had come”, “Hope’ is the thing with feathers,” “My life had stood—a Loaded Gun”

6/19 Homer, *The Iliad* (750 BCE) Trans. Fagles
Simone Weil, “The Iliad, or the Poem of Force”

6/24 Homer, *The Iliad* (750 BCE) Trans. Fagles

6/26 final project presentations
**Final project due in class**

**Assignments**
This is a master’s level course, and as such, the main work of the class will be your final project. What that project consists in is largely up to you. It must the equivalent of a 10-page paper, but that might mean a podcast, a timeline, a website, a series of movie reviews. Whatever it is, it should demonstrate a deep engagement with literature, theory, and criticism. At our last class session, we’ll each present that project for

**One possible option: the annotated conference paper.** Write a 10-page conference paper and then footnote it heavily to indicate where and how you’d expand it into something longer. Your footnote can be playful, questioning, and speculative, but the goal here is to write a text that is quite a tight close interpretation of a literary text as seen through a critical and/or theoretical frame and then to provide, through abundant footnoting, the breadcrumbs for how to undo, complicate, buttress, refute, and deepen the argument you made.

**Perusall annotations.** Complete your annotations of the secondary reading before each class meeting--sooner is always better!

**Participation counts.**

**Rough grading breakdown:** 80% final project; 20% participation (in person and online)
**Class policies and other information**

**Paper due dates**
Papers are due in class on the date indicated on the syllabus. If you are struggling to meet a deadline, speak to me well in advance: extensions can occasionally be arranged with less severe penalties.

**Attendance and classroom community:** You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the day’s assignment. Bring the appropriate texts and assignments. You may read on a tablet, but a phone’s screen is too small and I would strongly prefer you *not* read on your phone. **Students caught doing non-academic web browsing, texting, or whose phones ring during class will be counted absent and the offending device will be confiscated.**

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to keep up with the reading and the assigned homework by speaking with me *and* at least one classmate. Participate! We all learn more when everyone contributes; a constant state of distraction, frequent tardiness or breaks during class, silence will all lower your participation grade. If you are shy, speak to me about ways to participate. **Attendance** and participation affect grades. This is especially true in the summer time when our meetings are few and our schedule is compressed. Miss more than one class, and your grade will be affected; miss two or more classes and you risk serious consequences—likely including failure of the course.

**Email:** Through email, we can exchange information--from due dates to brainstorms for paper topics--that we are not able to cover in class. Email is the best way to reach me, but please be aware that while I check email several times a day, I am often not on-line at night (from 9 p.m. until 9 a.m.). DO NOT email me in the middle of the night expecting a reply before class the following day.

**Academic Honesty:** One of the pleasures and responsibilities of writing is learning how to learn from others and to give them the credit for what you have learned. Plagiarism is a betrayal of the uniqueness of your mind. It is also a violation of university policy and is, in some cases, a criminal offense. It and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. I expect you to do your own work. Please see the *Student Handbook* for a full description of Fordham’s Academic Integrity Policy. Some forms of plagiarism are easy to commit unwittingly. For example, it is a form of plagiarism if you borrow a phrase or syntax from a source, even if you cite the source correctly. If in doubt, ask. I will be happy to clarify.

**Ability & Disability:** Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently because we all think differently. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. If you would like to request a formal accommodation through the Office of Disability Services (Room 207, x6282).