

Spectrum Program Session 2

Course Title: From Picasso to Maus: Depictions of War

Course Description

Artists, writers, journalists, and moviemakers have the power to interpret events and can influence peoples' perceptions of those events, particularly on "hot button" topics. Using the subject of war as a backdrop, students investigate and analyze some of the most recognized written and artistic depictions of war to learn the skill of critical analysis and the art of persuasion. Through lively class discussions, debates and their own writing, students become more astute learners and strengthen their writing skills. This course prepares students for future writing and humanities/social science work.

Essential Questions

- How have depictions of warfare changed throughout the 20th century?
- What role does art, journalism, film, and literature play in protesting against or promoting a political agenda?
- Can the work of artists and writers affect the course or outcome of warfare?

Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Know how artists, writers, and filmmakers have depicted warfare throughout history using various media.
- Understand the motivations behind artwork centered on the theme of warfare.
- Apply their knowledge to persuasive writing exercises as well as critical discussions of various readings and film excerpts.
- Analyze, synthesize, or create a final paper and presentation on a selected representation of warfare in the fine arts, journalism, literature, or other media.

Instructional Strategies

This course will use a combination of instructional strategies in order to meet the needs of all learners. For in-class projects, students will be working in flexible grouping arrangements that include partner and small group settings. A variety of media (painting, photography, film, literature) will also be employed in order to cater to the different learning styles in the class. Students will have the opportunity to synthesize learning through the creation of artwork and writing samples in the format of their choice. Following the pre-assessment, certain reading assignments and small group tasks may be tiered in order to best meet the interests and abilities of the individual student(s).

Resources and Materials

Books

- Brecht, Bertolt, *Mother Courage and her Children*, 2007, ISBN# 0143105280
- Nash, Steven, Robert Rosenblum, and Brigitte Baer, *Picasso and the War Years: 1937-1945*, 1998, ISBN# 0500092745
- Spiegelman, Art, *Maus*, 1986, ISBN# 9780394747231
- Sontag, Susan, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 2004, ISBN# 0312422199

Articles

- Chivers, C.J., "The School," *Esquire*, 2004

- Doherty, Thomas, "Art Spiegelman's Maus: Graphic Art and the Holocaust," *American Literature*, 1996
- Hershey, John, "Hiroshima," *The New Yorker*, 1946
- McCann, Eamon, "War and the Irish Town," 1974
- Mockenhaupt, Brian, "I Miss Iraq. I Miss my Gun. I Miss my War," *Esquire*, 2007
- Sack, John, "M," *Esquire*, 1966
- Staub, Michael, "The Shoah Goes on and on: Remembrance and Representation in Art Spiegelman's Maus," *MELUS*, 1992
- Young, James, "The Holocaust as Vicarious Past: Art Spiegelman's Maus and the Afterimages of History," *Critical Inquiry*, 1998

Web sites

- The Art Institute of Chicago, www.artic.edu
*Students will use the online collections to direct their research of works on display before visiting the museum

Other Media

- Simon Schama's *Power of Art*, 2007 (DVD)
- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 1930 (DVD)
- *Rome, Open City*, 1945 (DVD)
- *Life is Beautiful*, 1997 (DVD)
- *The Pianist*, 2002 (DVD)
- *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, 1964 (DVD)
- *Control Room* (2004)

Materials

- 3-ring binder with lined paper
- pencils/pens
- computer access at home or in dorm is recommended
- basic drawing and art supplies (additional ink pens and pencils, markers or colored pencils, and sketch book)

Student Assessment

Pre-Assessment

The pre-assessment will consist of a series of brief writing responses to various works of art and literature depicting warfare. A basic quiz on 20th-century history will also be given.

Documentation of Learning

The following projects will serve as documentation of student learning:

1. "Picasso War, and Art" study questions
2. Double-entry journal for *Regarding the Pain of Others*
3. Student versions of Futurist Manifesto and/or collage in the style of Dada
4. Brief oral presentation of work on display at the Art Institute of Chicago (on site)
5. Written response to WWI-WWII film excerpt(s)
6. Observation notes of participation during class discussions and small group presentations
7. Written response to Vietnam war photograph(s)
8. War memorial/monument proposal
9. Final research project (see post-assessment)

Post-Assessment

For the final project, students will select and research a particular piece of artwork, film, or literature (suggested topics will be provided) that was not previously covered in the course. They will then be tasked with synthesizing various criticisms of the work, including their own insights, and presenting their research to the class in a format of their choice. Otherwise, they may also choose to respond to a particular military and/or humanitarian event

related to warfare using an artistic medium. The instructor will guide the final project and post-assessment, but it is expected that student work will be strongly self-guided

Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	In-class Activities	Assignments/Assessments
July 17	Introduction to course	Partner interviews; pre-assessment; "Art and War before Picasso" crash course	Homework: Read "Picasso, War, and Art" and complete study questions
July 18	Futurism, Dadaism, and Picasso's war art	Futurist Manifesto or Dada collage; "Guernica" exercise and discussion; View Simon Schama's "Power of Art: Picasso"	Homework: Read "Regarding the Pain of Others" (chps. 1-3) and complete double-entry journal
July 19	Depictions of conflict in painting and photography (1900-1950)	RTPoO discussion; library research of works on display at AIC	Homework: Read "Regarding the Pain of Others" (chps. 4-5) and complete double-entry journal
July 20	Art Institute Field trip	RTPoO discussion; field trip	Homework: Read "Regarding the Pain of Others" (finish) and complete double-entry journal
July 21	WWI-WWII in literature and film	Class reading of <i>Mother Courage and her Children</i> ; view film clips with choice of writing response	Read <i>Maus: My Father Bleeds History</i> for Monday
July 24	<i>Maus</i> and post-war expression	Read selected essays on <i>Maus</i> , present and discuss readings; select topics for final project and begin research in library	Work on final projects,
July 25	The Cold War and Vietnam	View and discuss <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> ; writing response to Vietnam war photographs; final project research	Work on final projects Read 1st half of <i>Palestine</i>
July 26	War and the Media	Argument, Persuasion, and Propaganda exercise; Read, present, and discuss selected examples of war coverage throughout history; final project research time	Work on final projects, Read 2nd half of <i>Palestine</i>
July 27	Memory, Monuments and Memorials	War Memorials slide show and discussion; Memorial design proposals (small group); final project research	Work on final projects
July 28	Art and War Today / Expo	Individual Student presentations / Expo	End of course

CTD Statement on Third-Party Web Sites

Instructors are required to thoroughly review any third-party web sites they intend to use in their courses for inappropriate content. However, because web content continuously changes, CTD disclaims any responsibility for any of the content contained on third-party web sites used in course materials. If you become aware of anything that may be inappropriate, please notify CTD staff immediately.