

Fall 2012

## HITO 133

# War and Society: The Second World War

Room: Peterson 102

Time: Monday/ Wednesday 5:00 – 6:20

Instructor: Ryan Zroka

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Office: HSS 2302

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00 – 5:00, or by appointment

Course Website: <http://rzroka.wordpress.com/>

### Course Summary

The Second World War is one of the most heavily studied events in modern history. Hundreds of books on the war are published each year. The history of the war, however, is most often told “from above” -- that is, focusing on the decisions of the most important military and political leaders. These sorts of histories have many strengths. They allow us to gain an overall impression of how the war unfolded, and to see how events fit together. But these histories also leave many things out. In particular, they tell us little about how the war affected the many ordinary individuals who were a part of it. This course aims to bring the experiences of these ordinary people to light.

The larger aim of the course is not simply to catalog the sufferings of ordinary men and women -- though such sufferings should not be forgotten. Rather, the aim is to understand the place of ordinary individuals in the larger story of the war. How were their lives shaped by their experiences in wartime? And how did these experiences lay the foundation for more far-reaching social and cultural changes? How, we also ask, did the choices of these individuals shape the larger history of the war? How did their beliefs and preferences influence the decisions of their leaders -- and how did they alter or resist policies with which they disagreed? How and why were they a party to acts of violence and murder? It is these kinds of questions that will guide our discussions in this course.

## Assigned Texts and Readings:

There are two assigned texts for the course, which are available at the UCSD bookstore:

*Hitler's Army*, by Omer Bartov

*Slaughterhouse-Five*, by Kurt Vonnegut

In an effort to reduce textbook costs, all the other readings are available in electronic format, either as an e-reserve through library, or through another website, as noted on the syllabus. Articles on e-reserve can be accessed at <http://reserves.ucsd.edu>. The password is **rz133**.

To view most of the online readings from your home computer, you will need to have set up a UCSD web proxy server. If you need instructions on how to do this, see [libraries.ucsd.edu/proxy](http://libraries.ucsd.edu/proxy) (Setting this up is actually a snap, it takes only a minute or two).

## Assignments and Course Requirements

### Midterm Exam (35%)

The midterm exam will be in take-home format. It will consist of several short essay questions. The questions will be distributed on Monday of week five (October 29<sup>th</sup>). The exam will be due on Monday of week six (November 5<sup>th</sup>).

### Analysis of a First-Person Account (15%)

This assignment will require you to examine a first-person account of the war – either a diary, collection of letters, or an oral account. You will do a 2-3 page write-up, based on your analysis. This will be due on the last day of lecture, which is Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup>. Complete instructions for the assignment will be provided in a separate handout. They are also posted on the course website.

### Final Exam (50%)

There will be an in-class final examination, given on Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. The final exam will consist of a short essay and long-essay questions.

## Schedule of Lectures and Assignments

### ***Week One***

Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup> -- Depression and Extremism: The Origins of the Second World War  
Readings: "The Great Inflation" and "The Culture Wars," by Richard Evans (e-reserve)

Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> -- The Outbreak of War and the German Blitzkrieg  
Readings: No Readings

### ***Week Two***

Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup> – The Widening War  
Readings: "'Survival Strategies in Leningrad during the First Year of the Soviet German War" by Richard Bidlack (e-reserve)

Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> – The Soldiers' War  
Readings: "The Black Ways of War," by Catherine Merridale (e-reserve)  
"Chickenshit, an Anatomy," and "The Ideological Vacuum," by Paul Fussel  
(e-reserve)

### ***Week Three***

Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup> – Why Do They Fight? Soldiers' Morale and Motivation  
Readings: *Hitler's Army*, by Omer Bartov

Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> – Soviet Society at War  
Readings: "Living and Surviving in Occupied Minsk" by Ute Gartenschlaeger (e-reserve)

### ***Week Four***

Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> – British Society at War  
Readings: Selections from *Living Through the Blitz*, by Tom Harrison (e-reserve)

Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> – American Society at War  
Readings: "Westward the Course of Empire," by Alistaire Cooke (e-reserve)

### ***Week Five***

Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup> – Allied Bombing  
Readings: "Protection" by Joerg Friedrich (e-reserve)  
*Midterm Exam Distributed*

Wednesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> – Nazi Society at War  
Readings: No Readings

### **Week Six**

Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> – The Holocaust  
Readings: "One Day in Jozefow," by Christopher Browning  
*Midterm Exam Due*

Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> – Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation  
Readings: preface to *The Bloodlands*, by Timothy Snyder  
(e-book <http://www.ucsd.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=584896>)

### **Week Seven**

Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> – Western Europe under Nazi Occupation  
Readings: "Resistance, Reprisals, and Community in Occupied France," by Robert Gildea  
(available at jstor.org)

### **Week Eight**

Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup> – The Destruction of the Third Reich and the End of the War  
Readings: Selections from *Backing Hitler*, by Robert Gellately (e-reserve)

Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> – Reordering Europe  
Readings: "Societies of the Uprooted," by Richard Bessel (e-reserve)

### **Week Nine**

Monday, November 26<sup>th</sup> – The Costs of War  
Readings: "Something has Gone Wrong Inside my Head," by Alan Allport (e-reserve)

Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> – War and Social Change  
Readings: Selections from *Russia After the War*, by Elena Zubkova (e-reserve)

### **Week Ten**

Monday, December 3 – Cultural Responses to the War  
Readings: *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut

Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> – Remembering the War  
Readings: "The Past is Another Country," by Tony Judt  
(e-book <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=hebo4986>)

***Finals Week***

Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – Final Exam (7:00 – 9:50 pm)