

# Media and the “War on Terror”

**Course code:** FMS 310

**Term and year:** Spring 2022

**Day and time:** Wednesday 18:30 – 21:15

**Instructor:** Seth Rogoff

**Instructor contact:** seth.rogoff@aauni.edu

**Consultation hours:** By appointment

<b>Credits US/ECTS</b>	3/6	<b>Level</b>	Intermediate
<b>Length</b>	15 weeks	<b>Pre-requisite</b>	None
<b>Contact hours</b>	42 hours	<b>Course type</b>	Elective

## 1. Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of media studies through a broad approach that utilizes critical methodologies from various disciplines, including literature, history, political science, philosophy, and film studies. The course will focus on the topic of the “War on Terror,” which reveals itself as an especially interesting media event during a pivotal phase of media development that witnessed the rise of the Internet and the spread of social media. Students will consider both secondary source analyses (articles, essays) and primary sources such as literature, art, and film.

## 2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the historical events and context of the “War on Terror”
- Evaluate the relationship between mainstream and independent media and the war
- Critique the construction of the narrative of the war and issues of narrative and rhetoric in general
- Assess the relationship between the “War on Terror” and the rise of the political Internet
- Apply/critique the notion of media spectacle to specific events and people related to the War on terror
- Conduct independent research on one of the course topics
- Express well-reasoned arguments orally and in written form

## 3. Reading Material

*All readings will be available through NEO as PDFs*

### *Required Materials*

- Aday, Livingston, Hebert, “Embedding the Truth”
- Apel, Dora, “Abu Ghraib, Gender and the Military”
- Bush, *Decision Points* (chapter 7)

- Choi, Watt, Lynch, “Perceptions of News Credibility about the War in Iraq: Why War Opponents Perceived the Internet as the Most Credible Medium”
- Chouliaraki, “The Aestheticization of Suffering on Television”
- Connolly-Smith, “ ‘Connecting the Dots’: Munich, Iraq and the Lessons of History”
- Davis, *Memories of State* (selections)
- Harp, Loke and Bachmann, “Voices of Dissent in the Iraq War: Moving from Deviance to Legitimacy”
- Hersch, “Torture at Abu Ghraib”
- Jones, Toby, “America, Oil, and War in the Middle East”
- Kellner, Douglass, “Lying in Politics: The Case of George W. Bush and Iraq”
- Klay, Phil, *Redeployment* (selections)
- Krebs and Lobanz, “Fixing the Meaning of 9/11: Hegemony, Coercion and the Road to War in Iraq”
- Maioli, Francesca, “‘Iraqi Freedom’: Counterhegemonic Narrations of the Occupation of Iraq from Blogs to Books”
- Mellow, “Iraq: a Morally Justified Resort to War”; 2) Jimmy Carter, “Just War – or a Just War?”
- Reese and Lewis, “Framing the War on Terror”
- Robbin and Buente, “Internet Information and Communication Behavior During a Political Moment: The Iraq War, March 2003”
- Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*
- Ryan, “Bush’s ‘Useful Idiots’: 9/11, the Liberal Hawks and the Cooption of the ‘War on Terror’”
- Ryan, “Mainstream News Media, an Objective Approach, and the March to War in Iraq”
- Simons, “From Post-9/11 Melodrama to Quagmire in Iraq: A Rhetorical History”
  
- Zimmerman, “Public Domains: Engaging Iraq Through Experimental Digitalities”

#### 4. Teaching methodology

This course will be taught as a seminar, centered on student participation in classroom discussion. Students will come to all sessions with the readings completed and ready to actively engage with each other. Discussions of texts and sources will be complemented with short lectures, in-class activities, group work, and student presentations.

#### 5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
09.2.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Introduction to the course theme and expectations; student introductions</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Introduction to the theme and structure of the course; student introductions. Short in-class media analysis</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> None</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
16.2.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Background and Context to the “War on Terror” and Media Studies</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Lecture on U.S. and Middle East history up to 2001/2003.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Eric Davis, <i>Memories of State</i> (selections); 2) Toby Craig Jones,</p>

	<p>“America, Oil, and War in the Middle East”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
23.2.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Creating Narrative I: The Genesis of the “Global War on Terror”</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Exploration of the media environment from 9/11 to Iraq War</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Krebs and Lobanz, “Fixing the Meaning of 9/11: Hegemony, Coercion and the Road to War in Iraq”; 2) Simons, “From Post-9/11 Melodrama to Quagmire in Iraq: A Rhetorical History”; 3) Peter Connolly-Smith, “‘Connecting the Dots’: Munich, Iraq and the Lessons of History”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
02.3.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Creating Narrative II: Liberal Interventionism and Humanitarian Justification</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Exploring both media and philosophical justifications for war on humanitarian grounds. Analysis of the media’s Afghan withdrawal narrative</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> David Mellow, “Iraq: a Morally Justified Resort to War”; 2) Jimmy Carter, “Just War – or a Just War?”; 3) Maria Ryan, “Bush’s ‘Useful Idiots’: 9/11, the Liberal Hawks and the Cooption of the ‘War on Terror’”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
09.3.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Corporate Print Media and War</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Analysis of how print media contributed to the framing of the Iraq War</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Michael Ryan, “Mainstream News Media, an Objective Approach, and the March to War in Iraq”; 2) Reese and Lewis, “Framing the War on Terror”; 3) Harp, Loke and Bachmann, “Voices of Dissent in the Iraq War: Moving from Deviance to Legitimacy”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
16.3.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Television and War</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Analysis of how television handled the Iraq War</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Chouliaraki, “The aestheticization of suffering on television”; 2) Aday, Livingston, Hebert, “Embedding the Truth”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
23.3.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> The Internet and the War on Terror</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Explores the relationship between the Internet as a mainstream information source and the Iraq War</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Robbin and Buente, “Internet Information and Communication Behavior During a Political Moment: The Iraq War, March 2003”; 2) Choi, Watt, Lynch, “Perceptions of News Credibility about the War in Iraq: Why War Opponents Perceived the Internet as the Most Credible Medium”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Midterm essay</p>
30.3.2022	<p><b>Mid-term break</b></p>
06.4.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> The Internet and Dissent</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Explores the emergence of non-corporate or alternative information sources in response to the Iraq War</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Zimmerman, “Public Domains: Engaging Iraq Through Experimental Digitalities”; 2) Maioli, “‘Iraqi Freedom’: Counterhegemonic Narrations of the Occupation of Iraq from Blogs to Books”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>

13.4.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Abu Ghraib and Narrative Crisis</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Focuses on the events and representations of Abu Ghraib and its impact on the narrative of the war</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Seymour Hersch, “Torture at Abu Ghraib”; “2) Dora Apel, “Abu Ghraib, Gender and the Military”; 3) This American Life, “<a href="#">Fall Guy</a>”</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
20.4.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Donald Rumsfeld as Media Spectacle</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Session centers on the figure of Donald Rumsfeld and his media presence</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Errol Morris, <i>The Unknown Known</i>; 2) Rumsfeld, <i>Known and Unknown</i> (selections)</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
27.4.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> The War on Terror, Lies, and Political Discourse in the Pre-Trump Age</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Focuses on the relationship between the war and the shifting perspectives on objectivity and truth in political discourse</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> 1) Kellner, “Lying in Politics: The Case of George W. Bush and Iraq”; 2) George W. Bush, <i>Decision Points</i> (chapter 7); 3) Greenwald, <i>Uncovered: The War on Iraq</i></p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
04.5.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> War on Terror as Fiction</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Analysis of short story collection</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Phil Klay, <i>Redeployment</i> (selections)</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
11.5.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Film and the War on Terror</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Comparison between Hollywood and independent film approaches to war</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> None</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Attendance and participation</p>
18.5.2022	<p><b>Topic:</b> Final Exam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Students will complete and submit final exam</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> None</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Final Exam</p>

## 6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (hours)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Class Participation, including reading and preparation for discussion	100	35%	Apply/critique the notion of media spectacle to specific events and people related to the War on Terror; Assess the relationship between the “War on Terror” and the rise of the political Internet; Critique the construction of the narrative of	1,2,3

			the war and issues of narrative and rhetoric in general	
Midterm Exam	20	25	Demonstrate a basic understanding of the historical events and context of the “War on Terror”; Critique the construction of the narrative of the war and issues of narrative and rhetoric in general; Express well-reasoned arguments orally and in written form;	1
Final Exam	20	25	Assess the relationship between the “War on Terror” and the rise of the political Internet; Express well-reasoned arguments orally and in written form; Critique the construction of the narrative of the war and issues of narrative and rhetoric in general	1
In-class Presentation	10	15	Conduct independent research on one of the course topics	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>		

\*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

## 7. Detailed description of the assignments

### *Assignment 1: Class Participation*

Students are required to come to class each session having done the assigned readings. Students should actively participate in the classroom conversation at least once per session, ideally more. Participation should demonstrate that the students are prepared. Active listening is also a part of healthy, productive class participation.

### **Assessment breakdown**

<b>Assessed area</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students are expected to attend each class session.	50
Assigned readings for the session should be done in advance of the class session. Detailed notes on the reading and materials should be prepared in order to facilitate discussion.	25
Active oral communication is required in each class session.	25

### **Assignment 2: Midterm Exam**

The midterm exam will consist of short answers to prompts and one essay. Short answers will engage with specific readings and/or issues covered during the first half of the semester. There will be five short answer questions, each requiring half a page of writing in response (double-spaced, 12 pt font). Essays will be three pages in length and must conform to proper academic structure: intro/thesis, body paragraphs, conclusion. Students must draw on the course material to support their answers. Total length: 5-7 pages, double spaced, 12pt font.

#### **Assessment breakdown**

<b>Assessed area</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students are required to meet the requirements of the midterm exam assignment by the date it is due. Essays will be assessed along the following criteria	---
Grammar	25
Structure	25
Content	50

### **Assignment 3: Final Exam**

The final exam will consist of short answers to prompts and one essay. The final exam will engage with specific readings and/or issues covered during the second half of the semester. There will be five short answer questions, each requiring half a page of writing in response (double-spaced, 12 pt font). Essays will be three pages in length and must conform to proper academic structure: intro/thesis, body paragraphs, conclusion. Students must draw on the course material to support their answers. Total length: 5-7 pages, double spaced, 12pt font.

#### **Assessment breakdown**

<b>Assessed area</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students are required to meet the requirements of the final exam assignment by the date it is due. Essays will be assessed along the following criteria	---
Grammar	25
Structure	25
Content	50

### **Assignment 4: In-Class Presentation**

In class presentations must be 15-20 minutes in length, including the viewing or presentation of the media source under discussion. Students should explain why they selected the specific media source, provide analysis in relation to the theoretical and historical readings, and then facilitate discussion.

#### **Assessment breakdown**

<b>Assessed area</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students are required to present a media source in relation to a specific historical period under investigation once during the semester. Presentations will be	---

assessed in relation to the following categories	
Quality of selection	20
Preparedness	50
Facilitation of discussion	30

## 8. General Requirements and School Policies

### *General requirements*

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

### *Electronic communication and submission*

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams. Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question".

All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

### *Attendance*

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, is expected and encouraged. However, the requirement that students miss not more than 35% of real-time classes is temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *Absence excuse and make-up options*

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), and the student wishes to request that the absence be excused, the student should submit an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence to the Dean of Students within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

**Late work:** No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

### *Electronic devices*

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

*Eating* is not allowed during classes.

### ***Cheating and disruptive behavior***

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the student's Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the student will fail the exam or assignment and be expelled from the exam or class.

### ***Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center***

Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin's White Paper 'The Plagiarism Spectrum' (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

At minimum, plagiarism from types 1 through 8 will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the student's Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, and to improve their academic writing, students are encouraged to consult with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at:

<http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.



### ***Course accessibility and inclusion***

Students with disabilities should contact the Dean of Students to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive.

Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

### **9. Grading Scale**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage*</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	95–100	<b>Excellent performance.</b> The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A–	90–94	
B+	87–89	<b>Good performance.</b> The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83–86	
B–	80–82	
C+	77–79	<b>Fair performance.</b> The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73–76	
C–	70–72	
D+	65–69	<b>Poor.</b> The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60–64	
F	0–59	<b>Fail.</b> The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

\* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: Seth Rogoff  
Date: January 13, 2022

Approved by: Ted Turnau  
Date: Jan 14, 2022