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## **Expository Writing 20:**

### **“Noncombatants”: The Home Front in Total War**

#### **I. COURSE OVERVIEW: WHAT YOU WILL WRITE ABOUT**

While it is perceived today as one of the greatest aberrations in human society, warfare has also been one of the most common experiences in human history. Yet popular conceptions of the history of warfare are often limited to the myth of completely separated soldiers and civilians; war is often spoken and written about as purely a pursuit of men on a spatially limited battlefield. This has not, historically, been so: there is a reason that we call the “home front” a *front*. Women and children have had much more to do with the history of modern war than one might initially expect, in conflicts ranging from “classic” state-on-state warfare to guerrilla conflicts, civil wars, and wars of colonial liberation.

We begin this writing course by looking at the idea of “total war,” addressing the Thirty Years War, the guerrilla edges of the U.S. Civil War in Missouri, and the two world wars in Europe. In your papers, you will question and examine the roles of both women and children, as agents and as targets, in these conflicts. We then move to thinking about the memory and meaning of war through the art and memoirs of the great German printmaker and sculptor Käthe Kollwitz and the intellectual polymath (and French Resistance member) Marguerite Duras. What did it mean to survive a war – or to survive your child? What do the histories, and stories, that we tell about war, about resistance, about patriotism, particularly stories told by those *not* in uniform, add to the national and cultural understanding of a conflict? How has that been different from the historical reality of the actual conflict?

In the final unit, students will choose their own historical research subject from a variety of options, spanning conflicts and wars ranging from recent (the “forever wars” of Iraq and Afghanistan) to the nineteenth century (the U.S. Civil War); from the modern and industrial (the Second World War in either Europe or Asia) to the guerrilla, civil, and anti-imperial (the Spanish Civil War and the Algerian War of Independence); and from analyzing different types of combatants (from forcibly recruited child soldiers to anti-war activism) to different ways to pressure an enemy (food policy and blockade). Students will analyze the conflict in their chosen subject through the lens of the unexpected agent in modern warfare: the woman and/or the child. We will ask what it means to be a “soldier” or a “civilian” in modern conflict, pondering the nature of the distinction.

**Unit I: “Home” and “Front” in “Total War” (Lens/Test a Theory: 1,200 – 1,500 word paper)**

In this unit, we will begin to appreciate different historical arguments about the split between home and front – why many often think this way, and why warfare has often evaded these simple constructions. We will focus on the Thirty Years War, the US Civil War, and the two world wars in Europe. You will have the option of choosing two different types of paper prompts: either a “lens” paper, in which you use one theoretical argument to illuminate something about another author’s more specific piece, or a “test a theory” paper, in which you use a specific set of evidence in order to test the broader theory of another author’s argument.

**Reading:**

Chickering, Roger. “Total War: The Use and Abuse of a Concept,” in Boemeke, Manfred F., Chickering, Roger, and Förster, Stig, eds., *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences, 1871-1914*. 13-28. New York: Cambridge University Press (Publications of the German Historical Institute), 1999.

Fellman, Michael, “At the Nihilist Edge: Reflections on Guerilla Warfare during the American Civil War” in Förster, Stig, and Nagler, Jörg, eds., *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861-1871*, 519-40. New York: German Historical Institute, 1997.

Zahra, Tara. “Lost Children: Displacement, Family, and Nation in Postwar Europe,” in *The Journal of Modern History*, March 2009, Vol. 81(1), 45-86.

**Unit II: Memory, Myth, and Mourning (Comparative analysis: 1,600 – 2,000 word paper)**

In this unit, we examine some of the works of great German printmaker and sculptor Käthe Kollwitz and the intellectual polymath (and French Resistance member) Marguerite Duras. Kollwitz lost her younger son, Peter, in the first few months of the First World War after agreeing to allow him to sign up underage; her memorial to him, and her print series *The War Cycle* are some of the most powerful commemorative art of the war. Duras evaded the Gestapo sting that arrested her husband, who was sent to the Dachau (and barely survived); in the aftermath she testified against the French collaborator who helped arrest her husband and her friends. Neither Kollwitz nor Duras “fought” in their war, yet it would be difficult to say that they were not shaped by the war, nor that they did not shape its aftermath. For this comparative analysis paper you will compare and/or contrast some aspect of the arguments that Kollwitz and Duras make about the experience of the “noncombatant” in modern war in order to help the reader understand something new about that concept.

**Reading:**

Kollwitz, Käthe, Whitner, Claire C., Kets De Vries, Henriëtte, and Davis Museum Cultural Center. *Käthe Kollwitz and the Women of War: Femininity, Identity, and Art in Germany during World Wars I and II*. Wellesley, MA: Davis Museum at Wellesley College, 2016, pages 11-20, 101-124 and the additional plates on pages 63-91.

Duras, Marguerite. "Monsieur X, Here Called Pierre Rabier" in *The War*, 71-112. New York: The New Press, 1994.

Paxton, Robert O. "The Truth About the Resistance," *The New York Review of Books*, Feb. 25, 2016 (as background).

### **Unit III: Women, Children, War (Multi-source research paper, 2,800 – 3,200 word paper)**

We now expand our scope as you choose your own specific research subject for the final paper. What does it mean to be a "civilian" in modern war? Do women and children play a role defined by age and sex – or do the power relationships rearranged by conflict cut across those boundaries? The goal of the research paper is to investigate a particular conflict, or particular theme within a conflict, from a historical perspective. I have included a range of topic options to select from below, with a "starter" source to get you thinking about each. These topics are meant to be broad; within them you are invited to choose your own specific focus.

*If you have another topic that you have a **burning** desire to write about instead, please arrange an individual meeting with me to pitch your idea.*

#### **Topic options:**

##### **The "Forever Wars" of Iraq and Afghanistan (Lynsey Addario, *Its What I Do* excerpt)**

The United States has been at war in Afghanistan since shortly after September 11, and in Iraq since 2003. Both are some of the longest conflicts that the U.S. has even been involved in, and yet both are poorly understood by the American public. Arguments in favor of both wars ranged from the purely strategic (weapons of mass destruction, the dangers of the Taliban and al-Qaeda) to moral righteousness (the Taliban's abuse of women, Saddam Hussein's abuse of the Kurds). In her memoir, MacArthur grant-winning photojournalist Lynsey Addario recounts both her experience as a woman war photographer, as well as her encounters with civilians, including women and children – and how often all of them seemed very far away from an idea of a "front line."

##### **The Algerian War (Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* / Djamila Boupacha, *The Story of the Torture of a Young Algerian Girl* excerpts)**

The Algerian War, from 1954 to 1962, was one of the most traumatic of the wars for colonial liberation, though it is rarely remembered today outside of either France or Algeria. A complex colonial holding, Algeria was actually considered "part" of France itself, yet was treated differently, with different laws for its mostly Muslim inhabitants. French colonizers were determined to make the Algerians French, a program that became highly gendered, racialized, and sectarian as the government promoted "unveiling" campaigns for *hijabi* Muslim women in an attempt to "modernize" them. The war itself was brutal, with some of the earliest terrorist acts targeting civilians – in which bombs were placed by attractive young women precisely because they were unlikely to be either suspected or caught – along with disproportionate reprisals by French soldiers. Here, Alistair Horne explains some of the terrorist campaigns by the nationalist FLN, and Gisele Halimi, a French attorney, describes her account of defending a

young FLN woman, Djamilia Boupacha, who had been brutally assaulted in prison by French paratroopers while awaiting her sentencing.

**The U.S. Civil War (Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the U.S. Civil War* / Karen Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* excerpts)**

According to historian former Harvard president Drew Faust, the experience of the Civil War was the experience of death – in fact, long-held estimates of 620,000 killed have recently been revised upwards to 750,000. Fighting over the meaning of what those men (and that count includes only the soldiers) has been ongoing since about the end of the conflict. The purpose of the war remains a challenging topic in US politics today, a purpose that has only been more recently dragged into the open with various challenges to remove Confederate monuments. Here, Faust explains the massive cultural impact of mass death on U.S. society, and historian Karen Cox argues for the importance of the role of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in perpetuating what has become known as the “Lost Cause” myth (as well as putting up many of those same statues).

**Child Soldiers (PW Singer, *Children at War* excerpt)**

Since the second half of the twentieth century, most armed conflict in the world has been through various forms of civil wars, guerrilla campaigns, terrorist campaigns, and revolutions. To those “irregular” conflicts have often been added quite irregular soldiers. Child soldiers have been a feature of civil wars in Africa (made most famous several years ago by the video against Joseph Kony), but have shown up on nearly every other continent as well; lately, ISIS has attempted to use young women and girls as suicide bombers. Here, PW Singer, a policy expert, explains the role of child soldiers in warfare today as well as the factors that influence their use.

**Food (Lizzie Collingham, *A Taste of War* / Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in WWI* excerpts)**

What counts as a weapon of war? Is it only ammunition, and the devices that kill quickly? Here, historians Lizzie Collingham and Maureen Healy show just how integral food policy was during both the First and Second World Wars: both as a weapon (something to blockade or withhold from the enemy) as well as a method of social policy and, in food-limited areas, the ultimate currency and source of power.

**Activism, Protest, and the State (Susan Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood, and Politics in Britain and France During the First World War* and Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* excerpts)**

What happens when noncombatants push back against their presumed “obligations” to state and society – or to the idea of war itself? Susan Grayzel and Christopher Capozzola look at women’s protests against the war as well as their often coerced participation on the home front. The everyday was political: Capozzola details working-class revolts against the “coercive voluntarism” of acts such as required knitting for troops in the U.S., while Grayzel describes how one woman, Hélène Brion, was tried for treason in France for distributing pacifist literature to soldiers. Both note the tensions between ideas of liberty and those of obligation (and

contestations of what it meant to be a proper “woman”), especially for a group of people who could not vote.

## II. HOW THE COURSE WORKS

### REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

You will need to purchase:

Kollwitz, Käthe, Whitner, Claire C., Kets De Vries, Henriëtte, and Davis Museum Cultural Center. *Käthe Kollwitz and the Women of War: Femininity, Identity, and Art in Germany during World Wars I and II*. Wellesley, MA: Davis Museum at Wellesley College, 2016. ISBN: 9780300219999.

This book is available from the bookstore; you are also welcome to find better prices elsewhere. If you do so, please search by the ISBN to confirm that you have the correct edition.

You can order from the bookstore at these links:

10:30am section: <https://tinyurl.com/300-F19-EXPO-20-227>

12pm section: <https://tinyurl.com/300-F19-EXPO-20-228>

All other the materials for this course are included in the coursepack, available from Flashprint (99 Mt. Auburn Street).

### WRITING AND REVISING:

*Expos is a writing course. The goal is not to teach you how to write a college equivalent of the high school five-paragraph essay. It does not exist. Instead, the goal is to think about writing as a verb (the process) as much as a noun (the product). This will help you to develop a toolkit that you can take with you regardless of your future concentration (or career).*

*The course operates on intensive revision of written work, in which you receive extensive feedback from me, but in which you must take responsibility for your own success. This is the distinction between developing that toolkit versus simply performing someone else’s corrections. Further directions are available in the coursepack.*

First, we will discuss a number of **readings**, both in terms of their content and in terms of their form and rhetoric.

Early in each unit, you will write **pre-draft response papers and exercises** that focus on particular writing skills that are important for the relevant paper type.

During each unit, we will also think about **transferability**, or how the skills we are working on will be useful beyond Expos in other classes, and beyond your time at Harvard.

As you are developing your papers, we will discuss a number of **models**, usually real student papers from the past, to help you think about your own plans.

In the middle of each unit, you will hand in a full **draft** of your paper. On both the draft and revision you will provide your readers with a **cover letter**, which will provide guidance to your reader about the aspects of the paper you are struggling with in addition to whatever other comments or questions you might have.

We will then think about how to improve and revise your drafts in two venues. One class meeting each unit will be dedicated to a **workshop**, during which we will discuss two student drafts (selected by me). Workshop serves to model both the revision and feedback processes of the toolkit. In addition, you will have a outside-of-class, one-on-one **conference** with me, during which we will discuss how you are revising your draft.

Each unit culminates in a final **revision** of your paper, which is graded. Since you'll have a significant period of time for revision as well as extensive feedback, the expectations for this aspect of your work in the course are high.

### **III. COURSE POLICIES**

#### **GRADES:**

Your grade is earned through the following breakdown:

Participation: 15%

Unit 1 Revision: 20%

Unit 2 Revision: 30%

Unit 3 Revision: 35%

*The standard for each paper becomes more demanding as we progress, since you are building on certain fundamental skills and techniques with each paper.*

#### **TECHNOLOGY:**

Laptops and tablets used for the exclusive purpose of this course are acceptable. Any use of technology in class (including during pair- or group-work time) for non-course purposes will result in a zero percent score for Participation. Repeated offenses will be deducted from the Unit III revision. The same policy applies to the use of cell phones/smartwatches, whose use is never permitted. It is not possible to notify individuals of specific grade deductions for this policy. Please consider this your official warning.

*The only exceptions to this policy will include: students with documentation from the AEO, students acting as the primary caregiver for a dependent child or ill parent, students with an immediate family member with a terminal illness, those currently serving as EMTs or other first responders, or anyone carrying the president's briefcase with the nuclear launch codes. The rest of us can and shall abstain for the length of class.*

#### **PARTICIPATION:**

Being prepared for class means that you have given careful thought to the reading and writing assignments for our class and the work of your peers. Being a good teammate in discussion means avoiding both meditating on the mellifluous sounds of your own voice *and* avoiding

pulling an ostrich. Please don't forget that good listening is crucial to making good comments. Participation is not an 'automatic A' portion of your grade; rather, it represents a serious reflection of your active and thoughtful participation in the course. Fair warning: participation and respiration are not the same thing.

**ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS:**

All response papers, drafts, and revisions must be submitted electronically, via our Canvas website, generally in Word .doc or .docx form.<sup>1</sup> It is your responsibility to ensure that the file you are sending is not corrupted or damaged (which luckily has not *spontaneously* occurred since the Dark Ages of the late 1990s); any such files will be subject to a late penalty (see below).

All work you submit to the course is for public readership — in other words, we will use student papers (possibly yours) as some of our texts this semester. If at any point you submit a draft or revision that you would prefer other students not read, please indicate so in writing.

**LATE WORK:**

Deadlines are firm. Drafts or revisions not submitted by the deadline will immediately incur a late penalty of a third of a letter-grade on the revision (e.g., A to A-); an additional one-third grade penalty will be applied for each subsequent 12- hour period that passes before the completed paper is submitted.

It is not possible to provide written feedback on late papers, exercises, or response papers. Failure to submit a paper revision within 24 hours after the deadline may trigger the Writing Program Completion of Work policy, which can lead ultimately to course exclusion (see below).

However, please note **a very good thing**: all students are allotted one no-questions-asked, 24-hour extension on a single assignment. You must let me know by email before the assignment is due that you'll be taking your "freebie."

Further extensions will be granted only in the case of medical or family *emergencies*, or a formal dean's excuse, and will require appropriate documentation. If you require an alternate schedule due to religious observances, please contact me ahead of time.

**COMMUNICATION:**

**Office Hours:** In addition to your outside-of-class conferences, you are welcome to make an office hours appointment. In order to help me make room in the schedule, please email me 24 hours ahead of time, with a list of times in which you are available. Please note: due to the schedule, office hours cannot be held during conference week. In order to encourage planning ahead, office hours are also not held in the 24 hours before an assignment is due.

**Email:** Please check your email daily for class announcements. If you email me, I will almost always get back to you within 24 hours, but don't count on a faster response than that (especially

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response papers will have alternative formats, but an electronic submission must always be submitted. See each unit's assignment directions for the relevant details. If you have questions about a specific assignment, please ask me.

at night and on weekends). Do not wait until the last minute with important questions (and check the syllabus and coursepack too). Please remember that email is **not** an ideal system for discussing ideas for your papers, revisions, etc. For those questions, please make an office hours appointment.

**HARVARD COLLEGE AND HARVARD WRITING PROGRAM POLICIES:**

**WRITING PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Because Expos has a shorter semester and fewer class hours than other courses, and because instruction in Expos proceeds by sequential writing activities, your consistent attendance is essential. *If you are absent without medical excuse **more than twice**, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and given a failing grade.* On the occasion of your second unexcused absence, you will receive a letter warning you of your situation. This letter will also be sent to your Resident Dean, so the College can give you whatever supervision and support you need to complete the course.

Apart from religious holidays, only medical absences can be excused. In the case of a medical problem, you should contact your preceptor before the class to explain, but in any event within 24 hours: otherwise you will be required to provide a note from UHS or another medical official, or your Resident Dean. Absences because of special events such as athletic meets, debates, conferences, and concerts are not excusable absences. If such an event is very important to you, you may decide to take one of your two allowable unexcused absences; but again, you are expected to contact your preceptor beforehand if you will miss a class, or at least within 24 hours. If you wish to attend an event that will put you over the two-absence limit, you should contact your Resident Dean and you must directly petition the Expository Writing Senior Preceptor, who will grant such petitions only in extraordinary circumstances and only when your work in the class has been exemplary.

Class begins promptly. A third occurrence of lateness of more than eight minutes (and each subsequent occurrence) will count as an absence.

Lateness of any degree will be considered as part of the evaluation of class participation.

**HARVARD WRITING PROGRAM COMPLETION OF WORK POLICY:**

Because your Expos course is a planned sequence of writing, you must write all of the assigned papers to pass the course, and you must write them within the schedule of the course — not in the last few days of the semester after you have fallen behind. You will receive a letter reminding you of these requirements, therefore, if you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of a paper by the final due date in that unit. The letter will also specify the new date by which you must submit the late work, and be copied to your Resident Dean. If you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of the paper by this new date, and you have not documented a medical problem, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and given a failing grade.

**HARVARD WRITING PROGRAM ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Throughout the semester we'll work on the proper use of sources, including how to cite and how to avoid plagiarism. You should always feel free to ask me questions about this material. ***All the***

*work that you submit for this course must be your own, and that work should not make use of outside sources unless such sources are explicitly part of the assignment.* Any student submitting plagiarized work is eligible to fail the course and to be subject to review by the Honor Council, including potential disciplinary action.

**HARVARD WRITING PROGRAM POLICY ON COLLABORATION:**

The following kinds of collaboration are permitted in this course: developing or refining ideas in conversation with other students and through peer review of written work (including feedback from Writing Center tutors). If you would like to acknowledge the impact someone had on your paper, it is customary to do this in a footnote at the beginning of the paper. As stated in the Student Handbook, “Students need not acknowledge discussion with others of general approaches to the assignment or assistance with proofreading.” However, all work submitted for this course must be your own: in other words, writing response papers, papers or revisions with other students is expressly forbidden.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with me by the end of the second week of the class in order to make it possible for me to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation.

**IV. SCHEDULE OF DUE DATES AND RESPONSIBILITIES -- PENDING**

***DIRECTIONS FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN THE COURSEPACK***