

U.S. National Security State
HIST 615-002
Spring Semester, 2017
Sam Lebovic

Class Details

Time: Thu 7:20-10:00 pm

Location: Robinson B333

Office Hours: Tue 10-11, or by appt

Contact Details

Email: slebovic@gmu.edu

Office: Robinson Hall B 375c

From World War 1 to the War on Terror, the politics of national security have been controversial. How should a democratic polity reconcile security with liberty? Has America's role as "leader of the free world" undermined freedom at home? What is the "nation," and what is "security," and who decides? How have the politics of national security shaped the broader arc of American history? In this seminar we will read widely in the history of the U.S. national security state, seeking answers to these questions. Readings will explore such subjects as the Red Scare and McCarthyism, citizenship and civil liberties in times of war, the military-industrial complex, programs of surveillance and counter-subversion, and the shifting relationship between state agencies and civil society. Throughout, we will pay particular attention to contentious debates about what has threatened American national security at different moments, and to the impact of American wars on culture, politics, and society at home. The course will both provide an overview of the history of the national security state and offer an introduction to the interdisciplinary methods historians use to make sense of this complex and controversial subject.

Course Requirements

1) Class Participation (15% of final grade)

Participation in class discussion is crucial to the success of this class, as well as your success in it. Faithful attendance and class preparation is expected – please read the required readings closely and carefully, and come to class prepared to discuss them. The better you read the class materials, the better the conversation, and the better the conversation, the better the class. Respectful, thoughtful discussion is good participation – neither your peers nor I will tolerate *ad hominem* attacks or soap-boxing. Questions are great, as are connections between current discussions and earlier topics, as are efforts to clarify points of confusion.

I will issue a mid-term grade in week 7 so you know how you stand. This grade will not count to your final grade – it is just a measure of how your participation has been in the class so far.

We will read a monograph a week. All books are available for purchase in the campus bookstore in the Johnson Center. Feel free to buy/borrow/read the cheapest versions you can find – e-books are fine – but please make sure to get the correct edition. Friedman, Gage, Glennon, Sparrow, and Storrs are available electronically through the library website. All other books are on 1 day reserve in Johnson.

2) 10 emailed sets of questions for discussion (Pass/fail)

Before each week's seminar, I would like you to email me 3 questions that you would like to discuss collectively. They are due by 1pm on the day of class.

These questions can be points of confusion about the reading, juxtapositions you notice between the readings, thoughts that the readings inspired for future research or analysis, challenges to the arguments of the readings, etc. The purpose of this exercise is threefold – first, it encourages you to think critically about the reading before class, helping you to process what you've read; second, it helps me to get a feel for the most productive places to begin and focus our discussion; third, it allows me to get a sense of your interests and engagement with the texts outside of your contributions in class.

Keep the questions short, and don't overly stress about how you write them. I'm grading these pass/fail – so as long as I receive them, you pass. If I think you could adjust the way you are approaching this task, I will contact you individually.

We have readings for 13 weeks, so you have 3 free passes. The two weeks you write reviews I will count these as your questions. If you would like to use a pass on any given week, please email me a short note to that effect before 1 pm on the day of class.

3) 5 page book review (20% of final grade) DUE on the day we read the book in class.

Each of you will write a 5 page analytic review of the book you introduce to the class. Book reviews should not simply summarize the text, but make an over-arching argument about the book's argument – what works, what doesn't, what is interesting, what could be further developed, what is missing etc. Successful reviews will develop an original and interesting line of argument that is sustained throughout the paper. Reviews should be emailed to me as a word doc by 1pm on the day of class (this review counts as your questions for the week).

4) Introduction of the book you reviewed to the class (pass/fail)

On the week your book review is due, each of you will be responsible for initiating discussion by posing the first question to the class. Questions should open up a broad topic through which we can explore the themes, methods and implications of the book – they should not be merely factual.

5) 5-6 page book comparison (20% of final grade) DUE on the day we read the book in class

Each of you will write a 5-6 page paper comparing one of the books we read in class (not the book you reviewed) with another book of your choice. Papers should not summarize the books, but analyze them comparatively. A large part of this assignment is choosing a good book for comparison – I will be happy to discuss selections with you in office hours or via email. But if you would like to discuss with me, we need to begin our conversation no later than my office hours two weeks before the paper is due. Reviews should be emailed to me as a word doc by 1pm on the day of class (this review counts as your questions for the week).

6) Second book presentation (5% of final grade)

In no more than 4-5 minutes, each of you will present to the class an overview of the argument, content, and method of the second book you read independently for your book comparison. Presentations should not be a summary, but an explanation of how the book adds to our collective understanding of the topic.

To receive a high grade for this presentation you cannot read from a prepared text. Be prepared to speak off-the-cuff or from notes – we'll all be in this together, so think of it as an opportunity to practice presenting in this way.

7) 15 page final historiographical paper (40% of final grade). DUE May 11, by 5pm.

Option 1: I will provide an essay prompt, asking you to synthesize the readings for the course, and construct an analytic argument based on close readings of the books we read over the semester.

Option 2: Your choice of topic

Based on 4-5 scholarly monographs of your choice, of which at least 3 must be read exclusively for this assignment, please write an analytic historiographical essay. The aim here is to closely analyze a small sub-field of literature of interest to you. Good essays will develop an overarching argument that makes sense of what works and doesn't work in the books in question, explain why, and sketch future directions for analysis and research. It is fine to re-use the outside book you read for your book comparison, or any of the books we read in class, so long as at least 3 titles for this paper are new.

8) If you are choosing Option 2 for the final, I will need a list of books for the final paper DUE March 24 by 5 pm.

Please email me a short outline of the research problem you want to explore, a list of the books you have chosen to review, and a short explanation (2-3 sentences) as to why you have selected each book (earlier than this due date is completely fine, and encouraged). I will write back to ok the selection. I'm happy to discuss potential books over email or in person throughout the semester. The most important thing is that you choose a set of books that hang together in some way and that are interesting and exciting to you.

If I have not approved a final list of books by April 6, you will complete option 1 for the final.

Requirements for all papers

All papers are due in Word format, 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced with page numbers, and 1 inch margins.

Please email all of your papers to slebovic@gmu.edu.

I will only grant extensions in advance, and on a case-by-case basis – all other late papers will be docked a half letter grade for each day they are tardy.

On Academic Integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity (<http://oai.gmu.edu/>) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. If you have any questions, concerns or confusion about this policy during the semester, please bring them directly to me – I'll be happy to help, and it is better to be safe than sorry.

Communications

Students in this class need to check their GMU email accounts regularly throughout the semester – I will rely on the mailtool in blackboard to communicate all announcements, such changes to the syllabus or to class meetings.

I will endeavor to respond to all emails within one working-day of receiving them. I am regularly away from my mail in the evenings and on the weekends, so while I *will* respond to your mail, I may not do so instantaneously. I will check and respond to email more regularly in the immediate lead-up to assignments in order to handle more urgent questions.

Please feel free to stop by my office hours if you want to discuss anything related to the course or your studies. If your schedule is tight, you are welcome to email me so that we can arrange an appointment at a particular time. Throughout the semester, I am also more than happy to meet by appointment if you cannot make my office hours – just send me an email or speak to me after class.

Special Accommodations

If any of these course policies pose a particular hardship for you, please come and speak to me directly.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Jan 26

Introductions – assigning reviews

Week 2 Feb 2

Mary Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 978-0199315857

Andrew Preston, “Monsters Everywhere: A Genealogy of National Security,” *Diplomatic History* 38 (2014): 477-500.

Week 3 Feb 9

Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 978-0199734795

David Kennedy, “The Political Economy of War: The Home Front,” in *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford, 2003) [scanned on blackboard; or available online through Mason Libraries]

Week 4 Feb 16

Beverly Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror* (Oxford University Press, 2008) 978-0199759286

Week 5 Feb 23

Claire Bond Potter, *War on Crime: Bandits, G-Men, and the Politics of Mass Culture* (Rutgers University Press, 1998) 978-0813524870

Athan Theoharis, “The Origins of FBI Intelligence, the Crisis of World War II,” in *The FBI and American Democracy: A Brief Critical History* (University Press of Kansas, 2004)

Week 6 March 2

James T Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (Oxford University Press, 2013) 978-0199930357

Week 7 March 9

Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) 978-0521795371

Week 8 March 16

NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Week 9 March 23

Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 978-0691048703

Fri, March 24 For Final Paper Option 2, you need to submit a bibliography by 5pm.

Week 10 March 30

Landon Storrs, *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* (Princeton University Press, 2015) 978-0691166742

Week 11 Apr 6

William J. Maxwell, *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African-American Literature* (Princeton, 2016), 978-0691173412

Assignment – Option 2 bibliographies need to be approved by this week.

Week 12 Apr 13

Andrew Friedman, *Covert Capital: Landscapes of Denial and the Making of U.S. Empire in the Suburbs of Northern Virginia* (University of California Press, 2013) 978-0520274655

Week 13 Apr 20

Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 978-0807845622

Louis Fisher and David Gray Adler, "The War Powers Resolution: Time to Say Goodbye," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 113 (1998): 1-20

Week 14 Apr 27

Michael J. Glennon, *National Security and Double Government* (Oxford University Press, 2014) 978-0190206444

Iris Marion Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State," *Signs* 29 (2003): 1-25

Week 15 May 4

Rosa Brooks, *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything: Tales from the Pentagon* (Simon and Schuster, 2016) 978-1476777863

Week 16 May 11

Final Papers due by 5pm.