Many of the most compelling debates in contemporary philosophy and social theory turn on modern war, and this course will consider some of the key philosophical contributions of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler and others and theoretical elaborations by Zygmunt Bauman, Michael Dillon, Achille Mbembe and others. But there has been a long and intimate relationship between War and Geography that few of these contributions acknowledge, and so the course will also pay particular attention to the changing spatialities of modern war, to the ways in which these contributions intersect with the densely concrete materialities of military violence, and to counter-geographies constructed by artists and writers.

Since the end of the Cold War, and with increasing frequency since 9/11, we have often been told that the conduct of contemporary war by advanced militaries (unlike their adversaries) has become accurate and proportionate, legal and ethical, thereby raising the bar for ‘just’ or ‘virtuous’ war. Another central aim of the course is thus to assess claims like these, which will involve a traverse across a wide interdisciplinary field that includes political philosophy, ethics and international law – all of which have also attracted human geographers.

Finally, I’m also particularly interested in the ways the visual and performing arts can become part of the research process – not only media to engage wider audiences (important though that is) – and the course will reflect this too.

The preliminary course outline is below; **required readings are shown in bold**, and I expect all participants in the seminar to have read and thought about them in advance of the class. The remaining readings are to provide further springboards for term papers, and in most cases identify major texts.
I’m currently completing two books, *The everywhere war* and *War material*, which address these issues; you can also find many of my own essays, presentations and commentaries at [www.geographicalimaginations.com](http://www.geographicalimaginations.com).

### Resources

**On wars in the shadows of 9/11:**

- Patrick Crogan, *Gameplay mode: war, simulation and technoculture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011)
- David Chandler, “War without end(s)”: grounding the discourse of “global war”. *Security dialogue* 40 (2009) 243-62
- Maria Ryan, ‘War in countries we are not at war with’, *International politics* 48 (2011) 364-89

**War is of course a moving target; the following websites and blogs are particularly useful at tracking it:**

Afghan Analysts Network at http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1
The AfPak Channel at http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/
Crimes of War at http://www.crimesofwar.org/
Outline

Tuesday 10 September  Introduction to the course

Tuesday 17 September  Neo-liberalism, biopolitics and later modern war

We begin by thinking through the idea of later modern war (and the connections between war and modernity) through debates over so-called ‘new wars’. On the one side, and closely associated with the United States, is a ‘revolution in military affairs’ (RMA), which originally promised that future wars could be fought with fewer ground troops through the intensive use of high technology. In this optic, new systems of sensing, surveillance and information management are wired to the development of precision-guided weapons to rework the spatial templates of geopolitics. In its later versions, the convergence between military operations and the advanced sectors of the global economy is ramped up through the enhanced time-space compression made possible by network-centric warfare. On the other side are the so-called ‘new wars’ characterized by the rise of para-state actors including militias and guerrilla forces engaged in asymmetric warfare. For the most part these groups rely on cheap, light even improvised weapons to combat the concentrated firepower of regular armies. They too are enmeshed in globalization, but Nordstrom describes this as a ‘shadow globalization’: many of them are supported and funded (at least in part) by emigré communities; they draw their recruits from the diaspora, from refugee camps and from city-dwellers who have been forcefully excluded from the global economy; and they are involved in translocal networks that are non-state, non-formal, and extra-legal, and which in many cases traffic not only in weapons but in ‘conflict commodities’ like drugs and diamonds.
On ‘techno-war’, the RMA and the connections between neo-liberalism and military violence, see:

- Simon Dalby, ‘Geopolitics, the revolution in military affairs and the Bush doctrine’, *International Politics* 46 (2009) 234-52
- Anna Leander, ‘The market for force and public security: the destabilizing consequences of private military companies’, *Jnl. peace research* 42 (2005) 605-622
- Anna Leander, ‘The power to construct international security: on the significance of private military companies’, *Millennium* 33 (2005) 803-26
- Peter Singer, ‘Outsourcing war’, *Foreign affairs* 84 (2005) 119-32

On ‘new wars’, see:

- Michael Brzoska, “‘New wars” discourse in Germany’, *Journal of peace research* 41 (2004) 107-117
- Philip Cerny, ‘Neomedievalism, civil war and the security dilemma: globalisation as durable disorder’, *Civil wars* 1 (1998) 36-64
- Helen Dexter, ‘New war, good war and the war on terror: explaining, excusing and creating Western neo-interventionism’, *Development & Change* 38 (2007) 1055-1071
On biopolitics and war see:

- Colleen Bell, ‘War and the allegory of medical intervention: why metaphors matter’, International political sociology 325-8
- **Colleen Bell, ‘Hybrid warfare and its metaphors’, Humanity 3 (2) (2012) 225-47**
- Michael Foucault, “*Society must be defended*”: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-6 (2003)
- Julian Reid, *The biopolitics of the war on terror* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006)

**Tuesday 24 September  Imag(in)ing war**

*Images have become increasingly important to the conduct of war; in Precarious Life Judith Butler argues that ‘there is no way to separate, under present historical conditions, the material reality of war from those representational regimes through which it operates and which rationalize its own operation.’ This requires us to think*
carefully about two, closely related issues – media representations of military violence and its effects, and the ways in which militaries have incorporated political technologies of vision into their operations. Today we focus on the first of these issues.

For general discussions, see:

- Dora Apel, *War cultures and the contest of images* (Rutgers University Press, 2012)
- Julian Stallabrass (ed) *Memory of Fire: images of war and the war of images* (Photoworks, 2013) (see a review and response by Stallabrass at http://www.aperture.org/blog/embedded-images/)

*In the second part of today’s seminar, we will think about images of war produced by photojournalists and artists. Both offer wide (battle)fields, but I suggest we begin by reading this general survey together:*


For other discussions of war reporting, see:

• Andrew Hoskins and Ben O’Loughlin, *War and media: the emergence of diffused war* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010)
• Deborah Jaramillo, *Ugly war, pretty package* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 2009)
• Donald Matheson and Stuart Allan, *Digital war reporting* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009)
• Gabriela Melischek, Josef Seethaler and Matthias Karmasin, *Selling war: the role of the mass media in hostile conflicts* (Intellect, 2013)
• Paul Moorcraft and Philip Taylor, *Shooting the messenger: the political impact of war reporting* (Dulles WA: Potomac, 2008)

On modern war and art, see:

• Paul Gough, *A terrible beauty: war, art and the imagination 1914-1918* (forthcoming)
• Alan Ingram, ‘Making geopolitics otherwise: artistic interventions in global political space’, *Geographical journal* 177 (2011) 218-22

### Tuesday 1 October  Militarized vision

We now turn our attention to the scopic regimes of advanced militaries. Much of this work owes a considerable debt to:


See also:

• Derek Gregory, ‘Seeing Red: Baghdad and the event-ful city’, *Political Geography* 29: 266-79

Our main purpose today is to consider two case studies. The first is what Wikileaks called ‘Collateral Murder’, an attack by two US Apache helicopter in Baghdad on 12 July 2007:
Tuesday 8 October         Bodies, wounds and somatic geographies

James Der Derian observes that many discussions of contemporary war are strangely devoid of bodies (of combatants and civilians) so we need to think carefully about bodies in war. Ground troops have long needed an acutely corporeal knowledge to survive the battlefield, which produces what is sometimes called a ‘haptic’ or ‘somatic’ geography; and soldiers are not only the vectors of military violence but also often its victims.

On haptic geographies see:
• Santanu Das, ‘Geographies of sense’, Ch. 2 in his *Touch and intimacy in First World War literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)
• Derek Gregory, ‘Gabriel’s map: cartography, corpography and modern war’ [in *War material*; I will circulate the pdf]

You can also find more online at [http://geotheory.wordpress.com/space/](http://geotheory.wordpress.com/space/)

See also:

• Paul Higate, ‘The private militarized and security contractor as geocorporeal actor’, *International political sociology* 6 (2012) 355-72
• John Hockey, ‘Head down, Bergen on, mind in neutral: the infantry body’, *Journal of political and military sociology* 30 (2002) 148-171

For our discussion of today’s wars, I want to focus on the work of two medical anthropologists:

• Ken MacLeish, ‘Heat, weight, metal, gore, exposure’ (Ch. 2 of his *Making war at Fort Hood: Life and uncertainty in a military community* (Princeton University Press, 2013); also download the Introduction at [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i9963.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i9963.pdf))

Then we will discuss a remarkable play:

• **Owen Sheers, *Pink Mist* (2013)**

You can download it from Amazon for $9.99. (If there is sufficient interest, we will arrange a reading of the play too, and open it up to a wider audience). If you want to know the context, see [http://geographicalimaginations.com/2013/06/05/playing-war/](http://geographicalimaginations.com/2013/06/05/playing-war/)

**Tuesday 15 October  War and the city**

• David Kilcullen, *Out of the mountains: the coming age of the urban guerilla* (2013) (available as download from Amazon for $9.99)
• Saskia Sassen, ‘When the city itself becomes a technology of war’, *Theory, culture and society* 27 (6) (2010) 33-50
• Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel’s architecture of occupation* (London: Verso, 2007) (see especially Ch. 7)

**Tuesday 22 October**

**NO CLASS [DG lecturing at York]**

**Tuesday 29 October  Re-writing the geography of war**

*Air power dramatically re-writes the geography of war and makes the distinction between ‘military’ and ‘civilian’ spaces profoundly unstable.*

In general:

• Martin van Creveld, *The age of airpower* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011)

In geography the work of Ken Hewitt has been exemplary in opening up critical perspectives on bombing: see especially

• **Ken Hewitt, ‘When the great planes came and made ashes of our city...’: towards an oral geography of the disasters of war’, *Antipode*, 26 (1994) 1-34

Hewitt focuses on the victims of bombing; see also:

• Susan Grayzel, *At home and under fire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

*On other historical geographies of the kill-chain:*

• Derek Gregory, “‘In another time zone, the bombs fall unsafely’: Targets, civilians and late modern war”, *Arab World Geographer* 9 (2) 88-111 [available at www.geographicalimaginations.com]
• Derek Gregory, “‘Doors into nowhere’: Dead cities and the natural history of destruction”, in Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan and Edgar Wunder (eds.), *Cultural memories* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2011) (available online via Koerner).
• David Fedman and Cary Karacas, ‘A cartographic fade to black: mapping the destruction of urban Japan during World War II’, *Jnl. historical geography* 38 (3) (2012) 306-28; see also the remarkable digital resource co-curated by Cary Karacas at http://www.japanairraids.org

*On targeting:*

• Nick Cullather, ‘Bombing at the speed of thought: intelligence in the coming age of cyberwar’, *Intelligence and national security* 18 (2003) 141-154
• Randall Wakelam, *The science of bombing: Operational Research in RAF Bomber Command* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009)
• Maja Zehfuss, ‘Targeting: precision and the production of ethics’, *European Journal of International Relations* 17 (3) (2011) 543-56

| Tuesday 5 November | Drones and targeted killing |

Many commentators suggest that drones (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or Remotely Piloted Aircraft) have re-written the geography of war all over again.

• Gregoire Chamayou, Théorie du drone (Paris: La fabrique, 2013); see also my readings of the book at www.geographicalimaginations.com
• Derek Gregory, ‘From a view to a kill: drones and late modern war’, Theory, culture and society 28 (7-8) (2011) 188-215
• Caroline Holmqvist, ‘Undoing war: war ontologies and the materiality of drone warfare’, Millennium [forthcoming: Early View]
• Ian Shaw and Majed Akhter, ‘The unbearable humanness of drone warfare in FATA, Pakistan’, Antipode 44 (2011) 1490-1509
• Peter Singer, Wired for war: the robotics revolution and conflict in the 21st century (New York: Penguin, 2009)
• Lucy Suchman, ‘Situational awareness: bioconvergence at the boundaries of bodies and machines’, Mediatropes (2013) (forthcoming)
• Tyler Wall and Torin Monahan, ‘Surveillance and violence from afar: the politics of drones and liminal security-scapes’, Theoretical criminology 15 (2011) 239-54


Tuesday 12 November: Precarious lives

I am lecturing at the University of St Andrews this week, but in my absence and in preparation for next week, I’d like you to organise a student-led discussion of


Tuesday 19 November  Civilians and the spaces of exception
Our focus here, to complement the discussion on, will be on the death – both conceptual and corporeal – of the civilian.

On the genealogy of the civilian:

- Stephen Rockel and Rick Halpern (eds) *Inventing collateral damage: civilian casualties, war and empire* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2009)

For civilian casualties caused by ‘advanced’ militaries, see:


On the space of exception, see:

• Derek Gregory, ‘The Black Flag: Guantanamo and the space of exception’, *Geografiska Annaler* B89 (2006) 405-27 [This is a special issue devoted to Agamben].

**Tu 26 November  War and the humanitarian present**

For historical context, see:


For a more genealogical approach, Didier Fassin’s work is indispensable:


For discussions of contemporary military intervention (and even war itself) as ‘therapeutic’ and humanitarian, and ideas of ‘military humanism’, see:

• Colleen Bell, ‘Hybrid warfare and its metaphors’, *Humanity* 3 (2) (2012) 225-47
• Costas Douzinas, ‘Humanity, military humanism and the new moral order’, *Economy & Society* 32 (2) (2003) 159-83
• Conor Foley, *The thin blue line: how humanitarianism went to war* (London: Verso, 2010)
• **Maja Zehfuss**, ‘Contemporary Western war and the idea of humanity’, *Environment and Planning D: Society & Space* 30 (5) (2012) 861-76.

For remarkably clear discussion of the muddy marchlands between military operations and humanitarian agencies, and the ethical and political dilemmas faced by those agencies, see:

Erica Bornstein and Peter Redfield (eds), *Forces of compassion: humanitarianism between ethics and politics* (School for Advanced Research Press, 2011)
• Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi (eds) *Contemporary states of emergency: the politics of military and humanitarian interventions* (Zone Books, 201)
• Thomas Moore, ‘Saving friends or saving strangers? Critical humanitarianism and the geopolitics of international law’, *Review of International Studies* (December 2012: ‘First View’)
• **Simon Reid-Henry**, ‘Humanitarianism as liberal diagnostic: the geography of humanitarian reason and the political rationalities of the liberal will-to-care’, Manuscript (in press); Simon has kindly agreed to share this pre-publication essay, and I will circulate the pdf but please do not forward to others
• Scott Watson, ‘The “human” as referent object? Humanitarianism as securitization’, *Security Dialogue* 42 (1)(2011) 3-20
• Eyal Weizman, *The least of all possible evils: humanitarian violence from Arendt to Gaza* (Verso, 2012); you can obtain a sense of the basic argument from the extracts assembled at e-flux here: http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-least-of-all-possible-evils/

**Organization**

**Auditing**

I have no objection to students auditing the course, but this will require registration: and I do not permit students to attend on a casual basis, dropping in for seminars as their interests move them.

**Visualizations**
Students will introduce the discussion each week. This will require preparing a visual presentation of 6-12 slides, combining images and text. The primary purpose is to provoke discussion (not to summarize the readings); the secondary purpose is to familiarize you with the design and use of presentation software. You can use PowerPoint, Keynote, or any other system, including open source software: but DO NOT rely on pre-packaged templates and, above all, DO NOT reduce the presentation to a series of bullets. Use Google Image and other search engines and image banks creatively to find your images; it is often effective to incorporate several into a single slide (including a background image). You will then talk to the images – not read from a prepared text.

My 10 rules for presentations are here; PLEASE read them carefully:

Consultation

I don’t keep regular Office Hours for graduate students; you are welcome to meet with me at any (reasonable) time, though preferably off campus (coffee or wine, your choice). Please e-mail me for an appointment: derek.gregory@geog.ubc.ca

If you encounter any problems that affect your work for this course, personal or professional, please do not delay in contacting me – I’ll be happy to help in any way I can.

Assessment

Assessment will be by visualization [see above] (20 per cent) and term paper (80 per cent). Your term paper must relate directly to the themes of the course, so please clear it with me in advance, and should be professionally presented, including a full bibliography. The body of the paper (excluding Figures and Bibliography) should be around 20 pages; those that exceed 24 pages will be returned for editing. Papers must be submitted on or before Tuesday 3 December 2013.