

War and Media: A View from Asia
Fall 2018
Professor Chie Ikeya

Thursdays 11:30am-2:30pm

This seminar explores the intertwined history of war and media from the vantage point of Asia. It traces how media (newspapers, book, radio, and film) has reported, represented, and interpreted major modern wars in Asia—colonial wars, the Second World War, wars of independence, and the “Cold War”—and to what effect. The seminar considers, in particular, the critical role that race and gender played in legitimizing and justifying major conflicts and large-scale violence of the modern era. In so doing, the seminar will ask students to think critically about the various and specific ways that race and gender have shaped the goals, strategies, legacies, and memories of modern wars.

The primary goal of this seminar is to give students the opportunity to design their own independent research projects related to the history of war and media in modern Asia and using primary source materials. Students are encouraged to work with a wide range of primary sources. By the end of the semester, students will produce a substantial research paper based on intensive primary research.

In class, we will think carefully and critically about the process of research and writing. Our goal will be to understand the challenges and strategies of producing original scholarship. In the first several weeks, we will concentrate on the issues involved in starting and developing a research project, including defining a historical problem, framing questions historiographically, and finding and analyzing sources. We will then think about how to organize our ideas and begin writing. In the second half of the semester, we will focus on the process of writing, revising, and peer review.

Assignments: The major assignment for this seminar is the research paper (due December 13, 2018), which must be based on your own primary research. The numerous smaller assignments required during the semester are intended to guide you in this process and ensure that you are able to complete your paper by mid-December.

During weeks 2-10, we will have two to three common article-length readings. These articles are all available in the “Resources” folder of the course Sakai site. Often, we read historical scholarship for content. But we will read these common readings somewhat differently, to think also about how the author made her argument, how she marshaled evidence, how she structured the essay, how she situated herself in the historiography and so forth. The idea is not that you should see these authors as models to emulate, but use their work to think about the process and the practice of writing history.

Attendance and participation: Attendance and engaged participation are basic expectations of the course. If you must miss a class, please contact me before that class meeting for approval. One focus of this course will be learning to talk about our own work with others and learning to talk about others’ work in a critical but constructive manner. You should be prepared to spend some portion of each class talking about your progress and posing questions that can assist others in approaching or rethinking their topic.