World War II through Film and Literature
(last updated 01-26-2016)

Harvard University Extension School
HIST E-1890/W (Spring 2016)
Wednesdays 5:30–7:30 pm (lectures)
Wednesdays 7:50–10:30 pm (films)

Course instructor: Donald Ostrowski
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Instructor’s website: <http://hudce7.harvard.edu/~ostrowski>

Teaching Assistants:

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phone: 978-275-6927 (o); 978-255-2279 (h)

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office hours: By appointment only

Discussion Sections (tentative schedules)
Mondays 6:30–7:30 (Wilson)
Northwest Building, rm. TBA
Thursdays 7:30–8:30 (Nicholson)
Online via coursewebsite
[Tentative. Discussion sections will begin the second week of class]

Course Goals:
The purpose of the course is to use film and the relevant literature as an introduction to the study of World War II. The basic questions we will ask in this course are:

– What does the film get “right”? That is, what in the film corresponds with our available source evidence?
– What does the film get “wrong”? That is, what in the film conflicts with our available source evidence?
– In those cases, where a film is based on a historical novel, what does the novel get right and wrong?
– Where does the film get “creative”? That is, where does the film make up something that does not correspond with the source evidence but that does not conflict with it either? In the case of films based on historical fiction (such as The Winter War), this kind of creativity can occur on two levels—the book level and the film level.
– How does the film’s (and author of the recommended reading’s) interpretation of the events and time depicted relate to scholarly historiographical interpretations of those same events and time?
To what extent is the film (and author of the recommended reading) affected by events and conditions contemporary to when it was made? The corollary to this question is: To what extent are scholarly interpretations affected by events and conditions contemporary to them?

**Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses**

The course is designed as a writing-intensive course. According to Pat Ballanca, Coordinator of Writing-Intensive Courses:

> “Writing-intensive courses at Harvard Extension offer students the opportunity to develop their writing skills in the context of a particular academic discipline, and they all feature common elements. Students will develop core writing skills, as defined by the instructor, in the discipline of the course;
>  
> • complete multiple writing assignments of varying lengths, at least 2 of which must be revised;
>  
> • produce a minimum of 10–12 pages of writing, exclusive of the required revisions, over the course of the term;
>  
> • meet at least once in individual conference (in person, by phone, or electronically) with the instructor or TA to discuss writing in progress; and
>  
> • receive detailed feedback on their drafts and revisions, on both content and expression.”

**Writing Assignments**

**Undergraduates** are to write three 3–5-page “theme-critique” papers (900–1500 words each) and one final project. For undergraduates, the final project will consist of one 10-page cross-theme analysis paper (3000 words). More information about the theme-critique papers and the cross-theme analysis paper can be found on pages 9–10 of this syllabus.

**Graduate students** are to write three “theme-critique” 3–5-page papers (900–1500 words each) and one final project. Graduate Students are required to write a draft and a revised version of a proposal (around 3 pages [900 words]) that must be approved by their teaching assistant before they can commence one 15–20-page research paper (4500–6000 words). Graduate students will find more detailed information about the theme-critique papers on pages 9–10 and about the proposal and research paper on pages 11–12 of this syllabus.

In a semester, we will view 15 films. Students will, thus, be required to write theme-critique papers involving a total of at least 6 of those films (40% [3 themes x 2 films each = 6], although students will be expected to view all the films and attend/view accompanying lectures.

The research paper is intended for you either to focus on a particular aspect of the relationship between film and historical study that ties a number of the films together or to research in depth the historical aspects of one particular film. Draft proposals for both of these papers are due **April 4**. Revised version proposals on **April 18**. A draft of the research paper (both undergraduate and graduate) will be required on **May 2**, so you can receive comments back on May 9, and revise it for a grade by **May 16**.
Grading

In the computation of the final grade, the theme-critique papers will count as 20% each (3 x 20% = 60%) of the total grade and the final projects as 40% of the total grade.

Give us one week to grade your assignment. We would prefer that you not ask special favors in terms of getting your paper back in less time. You may, however, hand in your assignments earlier than the deadlines. We will mark the drafts with a ✓–, ✓, or ✓+. The ✓– means a total rewrite is necessary and you should talk with your course assistant about it. A ✓ means you are headed in the right direction but substantial changes are required. A ✓+ means your essay is almost there in terms of getting a good grade. It does not, however, guarantee an A on the next version. Returned drafts need to be handed in along with revised versions.

If you choose not to hand in a revised version after you have done the draft, we will count the assignment as incomplete and will enter the following equivalent grades for computation of your final course grade: ✓– = E; ✓ = D; ✓+ = C. Please consider this as an incentive to complete the assignments.

Definitions of “Draft” and “Revised” Versions:
The “draft” of a paper is defined as the first version handed in. The “revised” version of a paper is defined as the next version handed in that addresses the TA’s or instructor’s comments made on the “draft”. Only the “revised” version will receive a grade. See “Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses” (p. 2).

Note on Use and Citation of Sources:
The responsibility for learning the rules governing the proper use of sources lies with the individual student. In registering for a course, students agree to abide by the policies printed on the Extension School website, which contains brief descriptions of plagiarism, cheating, and computer network abuse. Ignoring these policies may have unpleasant consequences. You will find an excellent introduction to proper citation in Gordon Harvey’s Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), which is available at the Harvard Coop and online at <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources>.

Required Reading List

1. Textbook for the Course (required):


Although there is only one required book for the course, all students will be expected to choose and read six (6) books from the following list according to the themes they are writing their papers on.

Required Reading Options (choose six books from the following list; substitutions allowed with the approval of your teaching assistant or the instructor of the course)
2. Recommended Reading for Each of the Weekly Films (choose six):


Note: Liddell Hart, History of the Second World War is out of print, but many copies are available through Internet book dealers. The other books on the list above are trade paperbacks available at mortar and brick and online bookstores as well as at local libraries. I recommend choosing early the books you would like to read for the course and searching for them through on-line book services and local libraries and bookstores.

Articles Available on the Course Website
Lectures

Assigned Reading

[Note: Items with an asterisk (*) after them are available on the course website. Items underlined are recommended books for that week. They are also part of the Required Reading Options list on pages 3–4 above]


A. Origins of World War II and Preliminaries

   Novel: Bottome, The Mortal Storm

Feb 3  2. The Soviet-Finish War 1939–1940  Liddell Hart, History, 42–48  Soviet Information Bureau, Falsifiers*  
   Novel: Tuuri, The Winter War

B. On the Home Front

Feb 10  1. Western Front  Liddell Hart, History, 26–41, 50–86  Greenberg, “Casablanca”*  
   Baker, “Impact of War”*  
   Memoir: Chriqui, As Time Goes By

   U.S. Holocaust Museum, “Treatment of Soviet POWs”*  
   Study: Beevor, Stalingrad

C. The Air War

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>“Attack on Pearl Harbor,”</td>
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<td><em>Study: Farago, Broken Seal</em></td>
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**D. Women in the War Zone and War in the Philippines**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Yoshida, “Battle over History”*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Study: Chang, Rape of Nanking</td>
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<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>2. Women in War Part II</td>
<td>Wynn, “The United States,” 80–92*</td>
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<td>*Memoir: Keith, Three Came Home</td>
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<td>Utinsky, <em>Miss U.</em></td>
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<td>*Study: Norman, We Band of Angels</td>
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**E. Persecution in Europe**

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<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
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<td>Noakes, “Germany,” 35–61*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Memoir: Ten Boom, Hiding Place</td>
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<td>Apr 13</td>
<td>2. The Holocaust (Guest lecturer: Gail Gardner)</td>
<td>Shermer, “How We Know”*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Memoir: Spielman, The Pianist</td>
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**F. German and Japanese Perspectives**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Lamb, “Liberty Ships”*</td>
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<td><em>Novel: Buchheim, Das Boat</em></td>
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<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>2. The Pacific War Part II</td>
<td>Liddell Hart, <em>History</em>, 613–638</td>
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<td>Nish, “Japan,” 93–103*</td>
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<td>*Study: Kakehashi, So Sad to Fall</td>
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**G. Post-War Issues**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
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<td>*Play: Mann, Judgment at Nuremberg</td>
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* indicates photocopy from reading.
May 11  2. End of the War in the Pacific and the Atom Bomb  
          Liddell Hart, History, 682–698  
          Collection: Frayn's Copenhagen

May 15  Final Projects Due

* Available on course website
## Films and Recommended Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Recommended Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td><em>The Mortal Storm</em> (1940)</td>
<td>Origins and the Peripheries</td>
<td>Bottome, <em>Mortal Storm</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td><em>Casablanca</em> (1942)</td>
<td>On the Home Front</td>
<td>Chriqui, <em>As Time Goes By</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td><em>The Cranes Are Flying</em> (1957)</td>
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<td>Beevor, <em>Stalingrad</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 24</td>
<td><em>Mrs. Miniver</em> (1942)</td>
<td>The Air War</td>
<td>Overy, <em>Battle</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 9</td>
<td><em>City of Life and Death</em> (2009)</td>
<td>Women in the War Zone</td>
<td>Chang, <em>Rape of Nanking</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td><em>Three Came Home</em> (1950)</td>
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<td>Keith, <em>Three Came Home</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 30</td>
<td><em>So Proudly We Hail</em> (1943)</td>
<td>War in the Pacific</td>
<td>Norman, <em>We Band</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 6</td>
<td><em>The Hiding Place</em> (1975)</td>
<td>Persecution in Europe</td>
<td>Ten Boom, <em>Hiding Place</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apr 13  
*The Pianist* (2002)  
Spielman, *The Pianist*

Apr 20  
*Das Boot* (1981)  
Buchheim, *Das Boot*

{}  
German and Japanese Perspectives

Apr 27  
Kakehashi, *So Sad*

May 4  
*Judgment at Nuremburg* (1961)  
Mann, *Judgment at Nuremberg*

{}  
Post-War Issues

May 11  
*Copenhagen* (2002)  
Frayn’s *Copenhagen*

*Note:* Films will be shown after class at 7:50 in Science Center Hall E. If you cannot attend that viewing, then you may, instead, view the films on your own. They are all readily available for rental from various video stores and vendors like NetFlix, as well as for purchase from Internet and non-Internet stores.

* Available on the course website

**Theme-Critique Papers Schedule**

Each student taking the course for credit is required to write three (3) theme-critique papers. For purposes of these writing assignments, the course is divided into three time phases. For Phase I, you are to choose at least two (2) themes about which to write your theme-critique papers or you may choose all three from Phase I. In Phase I, you will write a draft of each of the papers and, after you receive the course assistant’s comments, a revised version of each for a grade. You then have the option of revising your papers still further up to the *terminus post quem non* (*TPQN*) date. In Phase II, you write a draft of the paper and, after you receive the teaching assistant’s comments, a revised version of each for a grade. You do not have the option of revising further for the Phase II theme-critique paper. In Phase III, you write for a grade (no draft and no option for further revision). You may choose only one theme from Phase II or Phase III. Each theme-critique paper should be between three (3) pages (900 words) and five (5) pages (1500 words) in length.
Theme	Draft	For Grade	TPQN

Time Phase I (obligatory draft, obligatory for-grade version, and optional further revision) [choose at least 2 from Phase I]

*Origins and Periphery*  
February 10  
February 24  
March 9

*On the Home Front*  
February 24  
March 9  
March 30

*The Air War*  
March 9  
March 30  
April 13

*Women in the War Zone*  
March 30  
April 13  
April 27

*War in the Pacific*  
April 13  
April 27  
May 11

*Persecution in Europe*  
April 20  
May 4  
May 14

Time Phase II (obligatory draft and obligatory for-grade version; no further-revision option) [you may choose 1 from either Phase II or Phase III]

*German & Japanese Perspectives*  
April 27  
May 11

Time Phase III (obligatory for-grade version; no draft and no further-revision option)

*Post-War Issues*  
———  
May 14  
———

In addition, undergraduates are to write a 10-page cross-theme paper, which may draw on but not copy the theme-critique papers you handed in. The draft of cross-theme papers are due on April 27; revised version on May 11 Graduate students are to write a 15–20-page research paper going into greater depth on a particular topic. Draft proposals for the graduate research paper are due April 6. Revised version proposals, on April 20; draft of paper, May 4; revised version, May 11.

**Theme-Critique Paper Directions**

(Both undergraduate and graduate students)

For each theme-critique paper you write, see the films, listen to the lecture, and read the required reading connected with them. In your theme-critique paper, you are to write about an aspect of the theme connected with the films, lectures and readings. You are *not* expected to make a point-by-point comparison. Instead, you should choose something that struck you as significant and meaningful, which could be either a difference or similarity between the films, on one hand, and the readings and the lectures, on the other. Your theme-critique paper should follow the following structure:
(1) an introduction of a paragraph in length, in which you tell the reader what your main theme of your paper is;
(2) the body of your paper, in which you present your evidence fairly and succinctly, and you analyze it briefly;
(3) your concluding paragraph, in which you recapitulate your theme for the reader and show how the evidence and your critique relate to it.

In this respect, the theme critique paper follows the basic outline of the “Five-Paragraph Beast” (see p. 14 of this syllabus).

The theme-critique papers will be evaluated on the basis of three criteria: (1) correspondence to the evidence; (2) logical coherence of your critique; and (3) the conceptual elegance of the interpretation (your main theme). These criteria are discussed further in my paper “Three Criteria of Historical Study” (available on the course website). In writing your theme-critique paper, remember that this course is one of historical study, so try to contextualize your findings within a historical framework. We are not interested in receiving reviews of the movies or books (e.g., such statements as “The book was easy to read,” or “I don’t mind the director making movies; I just mind him making this movie” are not acceptable), but we would like very much to receive thoughtful, well-argued, evidence-based essays.

**Cross-Theme Analysis Paper Directions**
(Undergraduate students only)

Cross-theme analysis papers are meant for you to take your theme-critique papers to the next level. The term “cross-theme” means that you should compare two or more themes in the categories listed above. You may write your cross-theme paper using two of the themes you have already critiqued, or one theme critiqued and one theme as yet uncritiqued, or two themes that you have not yet analyzed. In any case, if you do use one or two themes that you have already analyzed in your theme-critique papers, then be sure not to copy your previous paper. You may include ideas and evidence from your previous papers as long as you cite them in some way (e.g., you might write: “As I stated in my theme-critique paper on ...”).

**Research Proposal Directions**
(Graduate students only)

In your proposal, which should be 3 pages (900) long, you need to indicate a tentative title for your research paper. Then devote a paragraph to each of the following points:

1. Description of research question(s)
2. Description of tentative answer (hypothesis)
3. Types of sources you plan to use to test your hypothesis
4. Broader implications of your research
5. Working bibliography


**Research Paper Directions**

(Graduate students only)

Whereas the theme-critique papers can be written without recourse to research other than viewing the film, reading the required reading, and listening to the lecture, the research paper requires you to do research outside of the confines of the required reading and lectures. You can focus your research paper one of two ways. One approach is for you to analyze, from a historical perspective, an aspect of one film in greater depth than you could in the theme-critique paper. A second approach is for you to analyze an aspect that you find in two or more films. The structure of your research paper should follow the same basic structure as your theme-critique papers (see above). And the criteria for evaluating the research papers are the same as those for evaluating the theme-critique papers (see “Three Criteria of Historical Study”).

**Formulating a Logical Argument**

A logical argument is a chain of reasoning, such that if the premises are accepted, then the conclusion must be accepted. An example of a chain of reasoning formulated in the early fifth century A.D. follows. It is from Augustine’s *Confessions* and is an argument against astrology:

I turned my attention to the case of twins, who are generally born within a short time of each other. Whatever significance in the natural order the astrologers may attribute to this interval of time, it is too short to be appreciated by human observation and no allowance can be made for it in the charts what an astrologer has to consult in order to cast a true horoscope. His predictions, then, will not be true, because he would have consulted the same charts for both Esau and Jacob and would have made the same predictions for each of them, whereas it is a fact that the same things did not happen to them both. Therefore, either he would have been wrong in his predictions or, if his forecast was correct, then he would not have predicted the same future for each. And yet he would have consulted the same chart in each case. This proves that if he had foretold the truth, then it would have been by luck, not by skill.

The outward signs of a logical argument can include “if..., then...” phrases, and words like “therefore” and “thus.” Sometimes these words and phrases are only implicit. In the passage above, Augustine uses two “if..., then...” constructions and one “[t]herefore.” The point is that, unless the argument is a fallacious one and, therefore, not logical, the only way to avoid acceptance of the conclusion is to attack the premises or the evidence.

**Constructing an Interpretation**
An example of an analytical interpretation follows. It is taken from Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (p. 397), in which Mattingly explains what is and what is not significant about the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 at the hands of the English:

Historians agree that the defeat of the Spanish Armada was a decisive battle, in fact one of the Decisive Battles of the World, but there is much less agreement as to what it decided. It certainly did not decide the issue of the war between England and Spain. Though no fleet opposed Drake, ... the war dragged itself out for nearly fourteen years more ... and ended in no better than a draw. Some historians say that the defeat of the Armada “marked the decline of the Spanish colonial empire and the rise of the British.” It is hard to see why they think so. By 1603, Spain had not lost to the English a single overseas outpost, while the English colonization of Virginia had been postponed for the duration. Nor did the Armada campaign “transfer the command of the sea from Spain to England.” English sea power in the Atlantic had usually been superior to the combined strengths of Castile and Portugal, and so it continued to be, but after 1588 the margin of superiority diminished. The defeat of the Armada was not so much the end as the beginning of the Spanish navy.

Mattingly characterizes his interpretation in the last line and presents this explanation as a way of understanding the evidence and the logical surmises we make from that evidence. The statement that the Armada’s defeat represented the beginning of the Spanish navy is also a hypothesis that can be tested against the evidence by doing further research.

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**Correlation of Films and Books to the Lectures at a Glance**

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<tr>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Films</th>
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<tr>
<td>B-1.</td>
<td>Western Front</td>
<td>Casablanca (1942)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-2.</td>
<td>Eastern Front</td>
<td>The Cranes Are Flying (1957)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-1.</td>
<td>The Air War in Europe</td>
<td>Mrs. Miniver (1942)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-1.</td>
<td>Women in War Part I</td>
<td>City of Life and Death (2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-2.</td>
<td>Women in War Part II</td>
<td>Three Came Home (1950)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-3.</td>
<td>The Pacific War Part I</td>
<td>So Proudly We Hail (1943)</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-1.</td>
<td>The Terror of National Socialism</td>
<td>The Hiding Place (1975)</td>
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<tr>
<td>F-1.</td>
<td>The Naval War</td>
<td>Das Boot (1981)</td>
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<td>G-1.</td>
<td>End of the War in Europe and the War Crimes Trials</td>
<td>Judgment at Nuremburg (1961)</td>
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*Available on course website

**Ground Rules for a Successful Term**

This syllabus is a statement of intent and not a legal contract. As such, I reserve the right to change or modify it, but changes or modifications will be done only with fair warning. At the Extension School, Harvard University standards apply across the board, including amount of work required and grading. There is no “watering down” or special allowance in this regard.

Each of the TAs will have a course guide for their assigned section. Students should follow the proscribed requirements for each section. Communication with your TA throughout
the course is essential.

The course is writing intensive, which means you will have a chance to practice your writing skills and receive comments on your essays more than in the usual history course. It does not mean that we guarantee to make you a better writer, nor will you be evaluated on your writing skills, except insofar as lack of such skills negatively affects the articulation of your ideas. Becoming a better writer, just like learning in general, is up to you. The world of learning is open to you and the process is never ending. One of the aims of this course is to provide you a means to continue studying history on your own after the course is over. We will do our best to assist you in the learning process, but in the end, what you get out of the course is mainly up to you.

There are fifteen 2-hour classes in this course. Even if I wanted to I could not possibly cover all of World War II during class time. What I can do is select certain topics and go into a little more depth than the readings provide. One of the aims of this course is to inspire you to investigate aspects of World War II on your own. I will try to provide some indication of what to look for and how to orient yourself when undertaking that further investigation. I firmly believe that every person benefits from learning to be their own historian. As a result, the human community benefits as well. For that to happen, however, we must not uncritically and unquestioningly adopt someone else’s interpretations, but instead we must think things through for ourselves and come to our own conclusions. That is why I place so much emphasis on method, as opposed to so-called “facts.” Historical facts as such are not given but emerge along with the interpretation (See “Three Criteria”). It is up to you to spot the biases and fallacies and to ascertain the evidence for yourself.

Since the time is limited, I cannot engage in extended class discussions while giving the lecture. I do encourage you to ask questions in terms of points of clarification and contributing to general understanding. If you have a point or points of dispute with something in the lecture (that is, you understand what I am saying but you do not agree with it), I am more than willing to discuss the issues with you outside class, but class time is short and we should all try to use it efficiently.

Finally, I urge you to be open to new ideas, tolerant of different viewpoints, and willing to try to understand that which may seem alien. Learning should be an enjoyable process, which is not to say that hard work is not involved. But that hard work can evoke a sense of satisfaction and achievement. The ultimate goal in this course is for you to come away with a sense of the joy of learning what before was unknown and of understanding what before was puzzling. That is our common endeavor.