Seminar: Vietnam Media Coverage  
JOUR 304  
Monday and Wednesday, 1:30-2:45 p.m.  
Robert Hodierne, instructor  
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Office Hours: By appointment  
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Texts:  
“We Were Soldiers Once – and Young,” by Hal Moore and Joe Galloway (Random House, 1991) Available on Kindle

In this course we will explore how the Vietnam War was covered, who covered it and what impact the coverage had on the conduct of the war. One of the central organizing themes of the seminar will be an exploration of the long-held belief by many in the military that what they saw as negative coverage caused America to lose the war.

I covered the war from 1966-67 and again from 1969-70.

Major American ground operations began in Vietnam 50 years ago when the Marines landed in March 1965. As part of the observance of that anniversary a number of events on campus are planned. Two in particular will be part of this seminar. First, the Vietnam War Film Festival. Five films will be screened on these Wednesday dates:

- Sept. 9 – “Go Tell the Spartans” with speaker Peter Arnett, who won a Pulitzer for his Vietnam coverage  
- Sept. 23 – “Platoon”  
- Oct 7 – “We Were Soldiers Once – and Young” with speaker Joe Galloway, who was a UPI reporter at the Ia Drang battle that the movie is about. He wrote the book of the same name.  
- Oct. 21—“Hanoi Hilton” Paul Galanti, a Richmond man, was a POW for six years. He will speak.  
- Nov. 11—“Apocalypse Now”

You will be expected to attend all of the screenings, which will be a 7 p.m. The venues are to be determined. The guest speakers will also visit class. You need to have read the books by Arnett and Galloway before they appear in class. Others who are experts on the war or who covered the war will visit class via Skype.

The other event is an exhibit of my Vietnam photographs. That exhibit will be kicked off by a lecture on Wednesday, Sept. 16, at 6 p.m. You will be expected to attend that lecture.

We are going to pay particular attention to two major events in the war: The 1968 Tet offensive and the My Lai massacre. You would do well to read up on those.
Papers: There will be a term paper with individual topics to be assigned early in the semester. There will also be several small papers in which you will be asked to locate and critique stories about the war from different periods during the war.

Plagiarism and other lies: Journalists are in the truth business. Part of telling the truth is being truthful about how we do our jobs. Webster defines plagiarism as the taking (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and passing them off as one’s own. Lots of big names have been caught in recent years plagiarizing – Stephen Ambrose, Doris Kearns Goodwin, etc. Just because something appears on the Internet, for example, does not mean you can use it as if you wrote it. If you want to use someone’s description, do so, but put quotes around it and attribute it. To do otherwise is to lie to your readers. There has also been a rash of liars masquerading as journalists, people who’ve made up sources, made up quotes, made up facts. If I catch you doing that, you will fail the course.

Attendance: Missing a class is not an excuse for failing to do the work assigned in that class. Ask your classmates or ask me what the assignment was. If there’s a good reason you missed the class, talk to me. But it had better be good. More than one absence will start counting against your final grade.

Punctuality: Be in class on time. Each class will start promptly. The door will be closed at the start of class and you will not be allowed to enter.

Cell Phones: No cell phone use, either voice or text, is allowed during class. If your cell phone goes off, you will be asked to leave the class.

Reaching me: Feel free to call me at 804-484-4759 from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. any day of the week. If you need me in person at other times, that can be arranged by appointment. You may e-mail me at rhodiern@richmond.edu. A special note about e-mails to me: Treat them like the business communication they are. Begin with a conventional salutation (Dear. Prof. Hodierne) and end with a polite closing (Sincerely, Jane Doe). Write in complete sentences with proper capitalization and punctuation. I don’t think emoticons are cute. Finally, I don’t respond to text messages.

Workload: To be successful in this course, you should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week.