Machiavelli stated war is politics by other means. The question of “other means” raises the issue of the mediatic infrastructure of war and the cultural-political framing of warfare as the media of history. The question of means highlights the largely untheorized relation between political violence, media and the technological under the rubric of a philosophy of means. Communication studies traditionally focus on how war is propagandized by mass media. In contrast, this seminar proposes that war is an encompassing mode of political communication and ex-communication in itself by which media is militarized and violence is mediatized. I propose that a theory of modern war is in effect a philosophy of media.

We will examine how modern warfare has generated new visual cultures, spatialities, modes of embodiment, soundscapes, and new modes of witnessing and archiving the traumatic. This seminar proposes that the visual technology of war and the technologies of event dissemination are linked problems in the political history of representation. The triangulation of person, place and time as the basis of perceiving history can only be accounted for by a history of mediated perception— a history increasingly characterized by military technologies and a militarized visual culture, and their fashioning of the modern sensorium and modern memory. The seminar will examine the thesis that the “informatization” of contemporary consciousness can only be understood through a media theory of war.

Requirements:

1. In class discussion and/or presentation of assigned readings: 30%
2. Take home Midterm: 20%
3. Term Paper: 50%
   - Exploration of a chosen thematic that works with 10 readings from the syllabus of 5,000 words in length. 12-point typeface excluding footnotes and references and external resources specific to the theme if necessary.

Class Code of Conduct:

- **SMS messaging/email devices**, or other portable communication devices are not to be used during the class.
- **Voice recordings** via digital/portable platforms will not be allowed.
- **Attendance** is important to the success of this class and to your development as a media expert. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of your final grade. Excused absences, such those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel will not affect your grade. Five unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.
• **Lateness** is disruptive to the seminar environment, and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

• **Plagiarism** is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course.

• **Student Work** must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in when they are due.

• **Eating in Class**: NYU rules forbid food consumption in classrooms.

**Course Resource Materials:**

1. Syllabus and all course readings in Classes website section.
2. Films to be selected will be screened in class as time permits.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to demonstrate:

• advanced understanding of research methodologies, vocabularies and procedures appropriate to graduate work in Visual Culture and the Archaeology of Media.

• developing research, writing and communication skills

• self-reflexivity as a research practitioner

• developing ability in identifying and addressing research objectives

• knowledge of a range of specific critical vocabularies and concerns focused on philosophy of media, violence, society-technology studies and visual culture.

• interfacing theoretical frameworks and practice based research

**Weaponizing the Body: September 1 - September 7**


**Ballistical Gaze: September 8 - September 14**
Virilio, Paul 1989 “Cinema Isn’t I see, Its I Fly” In War and Cinema The Logistics of Perception, Verso.


*Recommended Reading:*


**Space and War: Forensic Phantasms: September 16 - September 28**

Zanara, Jana 2009. Machiavelli’s Optical Arts: Political Theory, Action and Realism (manuscript)

Weizman, Eyal 2002. Introduction to The Politics of Verticality [http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article.jsp?id=2&debateId=45&articleId=801](http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article.jsp?id=2&debateId=45&articleId=801)


**Scopic Regimes, September 29 - October 5**


*Recommended Readings:*

In the Medium of the Body: October 6 - October 12


Doherty, Brigid. 1997 We are All Neurasthenics” or, The Trauma of Dada Montage, Critical Inquiry 24, Autumn, pp. 82-132

Occupied Bodies: October 13 - October 19 (Fall Recess October 14-15) Midterm Due Oct 17


Zoopolitics: (October 20 - October 26)


Parikka, Jussi 2009. Politics of Swarms: Translations between Entomology and Biopolitics, Parallax, 14:3, pp. 112 — 124

Speed and The Technological Uncanny: October 27 - November 2


Recommended Reading:
Redhead, Steve 2004. The Art Of The Accident Paper to ‘Urban Vulnerability And Network Failure’ ESRC International Seminar, Centre for SURF, Manchester, UK, April 29, 30, May 1,

**Auto-Immune Disorders: November 3 - November-9**


**Nuclear Fiction: November 10 - November 16**


Derrida, Jacques 1984. No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, And Seven Missives) Author (s): Diacritics, Vol. 14, No. 2, Nuclear Criticism (Summer) pp. 20-31

**Witnessing the Unwitnessable I: November 17 - December 7 (November 28, Turkey Day Recess)**


**December 8 -December 14**

Review

**Final Paper Due December 17**