History 201 The Woman Warrior

Professor Mary Louise Roberts, Fall 2023

Wednesdays 1:20-3:10, 2251 Humanities

University of Wisconsin Madison

Lydia Litvyak, Soviet Air Pilot, Second World War

"I hate wars and violence, but if they come than I don't see why we women should just wave a proud good-bye and then knit them balaclavas." – Nancy Wake, S.O.E. agent

This in-person course will introduce students to historical research by exploring the topic of women warriors in the United States and Europe. The recent Russian invasion of Ukraine has produced an image some still find unfamiliar: women engaged in combat. In fact, the woman warrior has existed as long as war itself. We will explore these women warriors in the two world wars in Europe. Some questions we will ask are: What happens when the industrialization of war enables women to fight in combat roles? What special challenges did women face on the battlefield or in resistance movements? How did they negotiate their identities as both women and

warriors? We will probe memoirs, diaries, and oral histories as well as historical narratives.

Learning Goals

In this class you will learn to **1. Ask Questions**: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research. Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions. Ask historical questions to guide individual research. Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion. **2. Find Sources**: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials. Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web. Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel. Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects. Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan. **3. Evaluate Sources**: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials. Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic. Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation. Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects. Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source. Summarize an argument presented in a text. Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question. **4. Develop and Present an Argument:** use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions. Write a strong, clear thesis statement. Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis. Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly. Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument. **5. Plan Further Research**: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation. Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract. Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship. 6**. Communicate Findings Effectively**: make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences. Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus. Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material. Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea

Credits:

The prerequisite of this 3 credit course is a satisfied Communications A requirement. The credit standard is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include regularly scheduled instruction, student meeting times during my office hours, reading, writing, field trips, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Contact:

Professor Mary Louise Roberts, maryroberts@wisc.edu

Office Hours, 5101 Humanities, Tuesdays, 2:30-4:30 or by appointment.

Materials

Books to purchase: Available at the bookstore

Svetlana Alexieivich, *The Unwomanly Face of War: An Oral History of Women in World War II* (2017)

Lucie Aubrac, *Outwitting the Gestapo* (1984)

Tatiana L. Dubinskaya, *In the Trenches: A Russian Woman Soldier's Story of World War I* (1930)

Sarah Helm, *Ravensbruck: Life and Death in Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (2014)

Vladka Meed, *On Both Sides of the Wall* (1948)

Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (1998)

Cynthia Simmons and Nina Perlina, *Writing the Siege of Leningrad: Women's Diaries, Memoirs and Documentary Prose*

Short Readings: Available on Canvas, HISTORY201: The Historian's Craft (005) FA23 (wisc.edu), under "Modules."

Requirements

Course attendance and participation 25%. Each week's reading assignment averages 150 pages. Please read the assignment and come to class ready to sharpen your communication skills by discussing and asking questions about the material.

Research Presentation. 15%. Once during the semester, you will be asked to answer the "Presentation Question" by giving a brief lecture to the class. Presentations should be 5-7 minutes. You will be graded on your ability to stick to the required time frame; the clarity and organization of your lecture, and your ability to field questions concisely at the end.

Reading Responses: 20%. During the course of the semester you will complete **five** brief reading responses based on the question asked in the weekly assignment. These are not opportunities to express your "opinion" or whether you "like" the reading. Rather, they are extremely precise and cogent **2 page essays (450-500 words**), for **10 pages** in all. No quotes should be included, but you should back up your arguments by referring to specific page numbers. Students will be provided with models of these response papers at the beginning of the semester. Due to Canvas at classtime.

Final Research Paper 30% You will write an **10 page (2500 words) research paper** on one woman warrior or another theme/topic we have dealt with in the course. To help you break down and prepare for this task, there will be a **research proposal of 3 pages (750-800 words) due November 1, and a rough draft of 7 pages (1750 words) due November 22.** The final paper will be due **December 13** at 5pm to Canvas.

In the skill workshop, which will constitute part of class time each week, you will learn all the steps you need to write this paper. A bibliography at the end of the syllabus can help you get started choosing a topic and beginning research. Your rough drafts will be turned in to Prof Roberts and shared with other students, so that you can get and respond to feedback on your work. This paper will be graded on the depth and breadth of your research, the clarity and importance of your argument, and the written execution of your narrative.

Final Presentation: 10% On the last day of class you will be asked to give a 5-7 minute presentation of your research. As in the Research Presentation, you will be graded on your ability to stick to the required time frame; the clarity and organization of your lecture and your ability to field questions concisely at the end.

Grading

A	100%--94%
A-	< 94%-90%
B+	< 90%-87%
B	< 87%-84%
B-	< 84%-80%
C+	< 80%-77%
C	< 77%-74%
C-	< 74%-70%
D+	< 70%-67%
D	< 67%-64%
D-	< 64%-61%
F	< 61%-0%

Grades will be converted to the UW MADISON Scheme at the end of the semester

A	100% to90%
AB	< 90% to85%
B	< 85% to80%
BC	< 80% to75%
C	< 75% to70%
D	< 70% to60%
F	< 60% to0%

Professor Contact:

maryroberts@wisc.edu; 5003 Humanities

Office Hours, Tuesdays, 2:30-4:30 or by appointment.

Schedule of classes

I.Women in Combat

September 6: Introduction
Reading: Ukrainian women serving as soldiers and medics to protect their nation - The Washington Post https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/agency-ukraine-female-soldiers https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/03/world/europe/ukraine-military-heels.html?smid=em-share
Reading Question: What does reportage on the Ukrainian women soldiers tell us about gender norms surrounding the woman warrior today?
Skill workshop: Learning how to quickly find sources on-line

September 13: First World War
Reading: Laurie Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland,* pp. 28-52 (Canvas) Tatiana L. Dubinskaya, *In the Trenches,* Introduction, Chapters 1-11
Response Question: What is a main problem Dubinskaya encounters as a woman combatant?
Presentation Question (5-7 minutes) Use the Stoff reading and one other source of choice to provide the class with the most important context about women combatants in the First World War.
Skill workshop Analysing Primary sources with a critical eye; finding sources in the library catalogue. .

September 20: Shaming Men

Reading:
Gullace, Nicoletta, White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the Memory of the Great War, *Journal of British Studies*, Apr., 1997, Vol. 36, No. 2, 178-206. (Canvas)

Melissa Stockdale, "'My Death for the Motherland is Happiness': Women, Patriotism, and Soldiering in Russia's Great War, 1914-1917," *AHR*, February 2004: 78-116 (Canvas)

Response Question: In what way do both articles talk about shaming men into fighting?

Presentation Question (5-7 minutes)
Using Gullace and one other source of choice, find out more information about the white feather campaign. Was it exclusive to England and the First World War?

Skill Workshop:
Figuring out the historical question and the argument in a secondary source

September 27: Russian women in the Second World War I

Reading:
R. Marwick and E.C. Cardona, *Soviet Women on the Frontline in the Second World War,* 7-31 (Canvas)

Svetlana Alexieivich, *The Unwomanly Face of War,* xiii-xliii; 3-112

Response Question. What motivated these women to fight on the front?

Presentation Question (5-7 minutes) Using Marwick and Cardona and one other source, explain why so many Soviet women fought at the front while women elsewhere largely did not.

Skill Workshop:
Analysing oral history narratives; doing comparative history

October 4: Russian Women in the Second World War II

Reading:
Alexievich, *The Unwomanly Face of War,* 113—206

Response Question. Why would a female combatant at the front wear high heels rather than boots (42) or sleep with earrings (187)?

Presentation Question (5-7 minutes) Using two outside sources, find out what happened to these Soviet women combatants after the war.

Skill workshop:
Visit to Library; learning about archival and other research sources in the library, more instruction on source research

October 11: Partisans and Library Visit
Readings: Barbara Jancar-Webster, *Women and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (1990), 124-167 (Canvas) Lucie Aubrac, *Outwitting the Gestapo,* 9-83
Response Question:. How do the Yugoslavian partisans compare with the Russian woman combatants? Explain one similarity and one difference.
Presentation question (5-7 minutes) Using two outside sources, give students the necessary historical context on the Resistance. What was the French Resistance? How did it function? What kinds of "resistant" activities were performed by men and women in the Resistance?
Skill Workshop: How to choose a research topic and begin exploration

II Women in the Resistance

October 18 France
Reading: Lucie Aubrac, *Outwitting the Gestapo,* 103-177,188-199, 222-230.
Response Question. Why does Lucie Aubrac fit her story into the nine months she conceived and gave birth to her daughter?
Presentation question (5-7 minutes) Using at least two sources, find out about Madeleine Fourcade, another prominent member of the Resistance. Who was she? What did she accomplish? How was she like/unlike Lucie Aubrac?
Skill Workshop: How to develop an historical question

October 25 Inside and Outside the Ghetto
Readings: Hayes, Peter. *Why?: Explaining the Holocaust,* 240-258. (Canvas) Vladka Meed, *On Both Sides of the Wall,* Chaps. 1-24 (9-155)
Response Question: Compare Lucie Aubrac and Vladka Meed. What is the main difference between them in terms of the wars they fight?
Presentations Question: (5-7 minutes) Give students the necessary historical context on the Warsaw ghetto and the Warsaw ghetto uprising.
Skill Workshop: How to write a research proposal

November 1 Inside Leningrad
Reading: **5 page RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE** Simon and Perlina, *Writing the Siege of Leningrad*, pp. 1-94
Response Question: Can these women of Leningrad be considered "women warriors"? Why or why not? Give two-three reasons for your argument.
Presentation Question (5-7 minutes): Give students more context about the siege of Leningrad using the "Foreword" by Bidlack in the Simon and Perlina.
Skill workshop: Organizing your research.

November 8–Spies
Reading and Listening: Gordon Thomas and Greg Lewis, *Shadow Warriors,* Introduction and Chapter 10 (Canvas) Nancy Wake, *The White Mouse,* 101-155. Imperial War Museum (London) Oral History. Story of Beatrice Jackman, Reel One, Danish spy ar resistant. Jackman, Beatrice (Oral history) | Imperial War Museums (iwm.org.uk) Canvas)
Response Question: Distinguish three personal qualities which make Nancy Wake such an effective woman warrior
Presentation Question (5-7 minutes) Using the Thomas and Lewis, put Nancy Wake into a large context concerning other women SOE spies. How was her experience typical? Atypical?
Skill workshop: Refining your Historical Questions

November 15 Imprisonment
Reading: Sarah Helm, *Ravensbruck,* Prologue, xvii-xxiv; Chapter 9-10,12-14,16-17, 19-21 Imperial War Museum, Oral History, Story of Hortense Augustine Daman Clews, Reel 10, Belgian Resistance Member sent to Ravensbruck Daman Clews, Hortense Augustine (Oral history) | Imperial War Museums (iwm.org.uk)
Response Question: Explain one or two ways in which these women, even when imprisoned, continued to be warriors.
Presentation Question: (5-7 minutes) Using Helm and one other source, give the students historical background on Ravensbruck.
Skill Workshop: Writing rough drafts

III. Women in Uniform

November 22 –NO CLASS. Thanksgiving
7 PAGE ROUGH DRAFT DUE. Send one copy to Professor Roberts and one copy to another student.

November 29 The American WACs
Reading: Meyer, Leisa, *Creating GI Jane,* Prologue, Chapters 1-6
Response Question: Comment on Meyer's statement: "Public fears of the consequences of establishing a women's army were rooted in a cultural inability to reconcile the categories of "woman" and "soldier."
Presentation Question (5-7 minutes) Explore the career of one graduate of West Point by using th West Point Center for Oral History
Skill Workshop: Problem-solving and Critiquing each other's work

December 6 – The British WAAFs
Reading: "Memories of WAAF Corporal Hemus, now Eileen Shaw" and "WAAF Unwary," by Mrs. G. Reilly née G.M. Garman, Both from the Imperial War Museum, Doc. 1553.
Response Question, Write about what **one** of these women focuses on in her memoir. What are the most important things she remembers? Explain why.
Presentation Question: (5-7 minutes) Using Crang, *Sisters in Arms: Women in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War,* give the students some background on the WAACs.
Skill Workshop: Problem-solving and Critiquing each other's work

December 13 Final Presentations **FINAL PAPERS DUE to Canvas, 5pm.**

Woman Warriors: Places to get started

Primary:

Anthionioz, Geneviève de Gaulle, *The Dawn of Hope: A Memoir of Ravensbruck*

Bancroft, Mary, *Autobiography of a Spy*

Duras, Marguerite, *The War: A Memoir*

Fourcade, Marie-Madeleine, *Noah's Ark: A Memoir of Struggle and Resistance*

Opdyke, Irene Gut, *In my hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer*

Pavlichenko, Lyudmila, *Lady Death: The Memoirs of Stalin's Sniper*

Smirnova-Medvedeva, Zoia, *On the Road to Stalingrad*

Tillion, Germaine, *Ravensbruck*

Secondary:

Battalion, Judy, *The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Womeon Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos*

Brysac, Shireen, *Resisting Hitler: Mildred Harnack and the Red Orchestra*

Cottam, Kazimiera, *Women in War and Resistance: Selected Biographies of Soviet Women Soldiers*

Crang, Jeremy, *Sisters in Arms: Women in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War*

Dombrowski, *Women and War in the Twentieth Century : enlisted with or without consent*

Donner, Rebecca, *All the Frequent Troubles of our Days: The true story of the American Woman at the Heart of the German Resistance to Hitler* (about American Mildred Harnack)

Humbert, Agnes, *Résistance: A Woman's Journey of Struggle and Defiance in Occupied France,* based on *Notre guerre, 1946*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2008

Krylova, Anna, *Soviet Women in combat: A History of Violence on the Eastern Front*

Moorehead, Caroline, *A House in the Mountains: The Women who Liberated Italy from Fascism*

Pattinson, Juliet, *Behind Enemy Lines: Gender, Passing and the Special Operations Executive in the Second World War*

Pennington, Reina, *Wings, Women and War: Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat*

Rossiter, Margaret. *Women in the Resistance.* New York: Praeger, 1986.

Schoenbrun, David, *Soldiers of the Night: The Story of the French Resistance*

Weitz, Margaret Collins, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945,* New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1995