



HISTORY 395.3
Aviation and the Twentieth Century
Winter 2011

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Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00 - 12:00 and by appointment

Course times: Wednesdays 13:30 - 16:20

Room: AGRI 2E19

Course Description

This course will examine aviation from the Wright Brothers' first flight to the present. We will start by tracing the first developments in aviation and the earliest fascinations with flight. We will then move into the First World War and examine the idea of the "ace" flyer. We will spend three classes examining aviation during the interwar period (1920s and 1930s) – the so-called "Golden Age" of aviation. It was during the interwar years that flying had especially potent popular and political symbolism. In the case of the Second World War we will look at two critical topics: the use of the airplane in combat (looking at ideas of air superiority and tactical bombing) and strategic bombing (both conventional and atomic weapons). We will then move to examining those issues within the Cold War context. Also with the Cold War in the background, we will look at the race to the Moon between the United States and the Soviet Union. Finally, we will examine how private flying and jet transportation have revolutionized notions of distance, time and space and altered how many people travel and do business.

Generally, this course will not focus on the technical details of airplanes and aviation. Instead, we will focus more on the concept of airmindedness and try to explain the nuances of popular culture's relationship with flight. Some of the critical issues we will explore are: Why have westerners been so profoundly interested in flight? How does that interest change according to time, technology and space? How do our views of flying and flyers reflect popular views, attitudes and anxieties? How does aviation affect our understanding of warfare, science, technology, gender and nationalism? Or, how can aviation be used to examine those same issues?

Course Requirements

Weekly Reading Responses	15%
In-class participation	20%
Presentation	10%
Term Paper	25%
Final Exam (take-home)	30%

Since this class is part seminar, a major portion of your mark will be in-class participation. Your participation in the class will be evaluated based on your demonstrated comprehension of the week's reading and the quality your contribution to the class discussion as measured by critical insight and thought-provoking commentary. Additionally, you will be required to conduct a 10-12 minute presentation based on the findings of your term paper. The presentation should be formatted along the lines of an academic conference presentation. It will be evaluated on both ideas and how they are presented (not unlike a term paper), along with the discussion it provokes amongst your classmates. To facilitate this discussion, all students will be required to provide their classmates with a copy of their paper before their presentation. Presentation time slots will be drawn by lot on **January 19, 2011**.

You will be required to write six reading responses for the class. They are due at the beginning of each class. The responses should be between two and three pages in length. You can select any six of the ten weeks when writing a response is possible (up to March 23, 2010). The responses should illuminate common themes found within the readings and connections between them along with your personal responses. They should not be summaries of the readings.

You will be required to write one term paper during this course. It is **due by 18:00 on Wednesday March 23, 2011**. No papers will be accepted after 17:00 on Wednesday March 30, 2011. It must be no less than 15 full pages (double-spaced 12 pt font) and no longer than 18 full pages (this page count does not include title page, appendices, and the bibliography). The paper is intended to enhance your critical thinking, reading, research and writing skills. More specific essay writing suggestions, guidelines and formatting instructions will follow and are binding.

The paper will be research intensive and thesis-driven. You will be required to choose your own topic, research it using the university library; there will be a minimum number of sources required for the paper, though it is suggested you exceed this number. On **Wednesday February 2, 2011** a **term-paper proposal** will be due in-class. This proposal will indicate what topic you plan to write your paper on, what your preliminary thesis will be and what sources you intend to use. Though it will not be graded, **failure to submit this proposal** will result in 20 points (out of a possible 100) being deducted from your mark for the term paper. Since this proposal is due early in the course it is recommended that you skim ahead in the readings or consult with the instructor for possible paper ideas.

You will receive a take-home final exam. The final exam will be distributed on **Wednesday March 30, 2011**. It will be **due by 17:00 on Wednesday April 13, 2011**. No final exams will be accepted after 17:00 on April 20, 2011. You will be required to write short answer questions identifying and stating the significance of certain important places, images, people, things, events, etc. from the course and write essay questions.

Required Readings

Richard Overy, *The Air War, 1939-1945*.

Ian Patterson, *Guernica and Total War*.

Mary-Lynn Rampolla. *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*.

Additional readings available on the PAWS site, or on reserve at the library.

Class Policies and Academic Dishonesty

Deadlines will be strictly enforced. Without prior authorization, late submission of the term-paper or final exam will be penalized **10 points for the first day late** and **two points per day** thereafter – this includes weekends and holidays. Without prior authorization, reading responses will not be accepted late, nor will they be accepted if you do not attend class.

Non-attendance for your designated presentation time-slot will result in a mark of **ZERO**.

You may not use any aids beyond the course readings and your lecture notes when preparing your answer for the final exam.

Scholarship is premised on academic honesty and integrity. Authors must properly acknowledge the primary and secondary sources upon which they base their ideas and arguments so that original contributions are readily identifiable. Failure to do so is unethical and constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a very serious offense. It involves the unattributed copying and presentation of another person's thoughts, writings, or discoveries from another source — including purchased essays, the essays of other students, or material from the Internet — as your own. Plagiarism also includes close paraphrasing — changing only a few words from the sources. You must write your essays and other written assignments in **your own words**. It is also unethical to hand in the same essay to two different classes, unless you have made a special arrangement with the instructors of both classes. Your instructors must report all cases of plagiarism to the Undergraduate Director of the History Department, who will review the materials and, in most instances, submit the case to the College of Arts and Science Committee on Academic Dishonesty. For University regulations regarding academic dishonesty on the part of students, see:

http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/reports_forms/reports/09-27-99.php

Other formalities:

- Please address any concerns or grievances with an assigned mark in writing (email).
- Refrain from using your cell phone in class (including sending text messages).
- Always treat your other classmates with respect. Bigoted, derogatory or inflammatory comments will not be tolerated.
- Please send emails with proper subject headings and professional formatting.

Course Schedule

Wednesday January 5, 2011 – Introductions and Aviation Before Powered Flight

January 12 – Pioneering Days: 1903-1914

Readings:

Joseph Corn, *The Winged Gospel: America's Romance With Aviation, 1900-1950*, "1. Americans Greet the Airplane" & "2. The Prophetic Creed of Flight."

Michael Paris, *Winged Warfare: The Literature and Theory of Aerial Warfare in Britain, 1859-1917*. “2. Fictions of Future Aerial Warfare.”

Robert Wohl, *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908-1914*, “2. French Wings Over Dover.”

January 19 – Knights of the Air: The First World War

Readings

Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination*, “2. The Image of the War Ace.” [digital copy Available through the library]

Michael Paris. “The Rise of the Airmen: The Origins of Air Force Elitism, 1890-1918.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 1 (January 1993) : 123-141.

Ian Patterson, *Guernica and Total War*, “2. Civilisation and its Discontents” [74-93]

Robert Wohl, *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908-1918*, “7. Aces”

January 26 – Totalitarianism in the Sky: The Interwar Years I

Readings

Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination*, “5. The Nazi Discipline of Air-mindedness” [digital copy Available through the library]

Scott Palmer, *Dictatorship of the Air: Aviation Culture and the Fate of Modern Russia*, “8. Higher, Faster, Farther” [digital copy Available through the library]

Robert Wohl, *The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950*, “2. Flying and Fascism”

February 2 – Democracy in the Sky: The Interwar Years II

Readings

Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, “VIII. Night Dancer.”

Liz Millward, *Women in British Imperial Airspace, 1922-1937*, “1. The Very Idea of Airspace.”

James Thurber, “The Greatest Man in the World.”

Robert Wohl, *The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950*, “4. Knights of the Air.”

February 9 – “The Bomber Will Always Get Through:” The Interwar Years III

TERM PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

Readings

Richard Overy, *The Air War, 1939-1945*, “Introduction” and “1. Preparing For War.”

Ian Patterson, *Guernica and Total War*, “Introduction” “1. ‘Guernica’s thermite rain,’” and “2. Civilisation and its Discontents” [93-139]

February 16 – Angels on Our Shoulders: The Second World War I

Readings

Overy, “2. The European Air War September 1939-41,” “3. The European Air War 1941-45” and “4. The Air War in the Far East”

* Between February 16 and March 2 skim Overy Chapters 6-8

March 2 – Blitzes and Firestorms: The Second World War II

Readings:

Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare*, “5. The Combined Bomber Offensive.”

Overy, “5. Strategic Bombing Offensives,” and “Conclusions”

Patterson, “3. War Begins at Home,” and “Epilogue”

Selections from Joseph Heller, *Catch-22*.

March 9 – Ex Astris, Scientia: The Cold War in the Air I

Readings:

Barry Buzan, “The International Relations of Star Trek and Battlestar Galactica,” *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 39 no. 1 (2010) : 175-180.

Selections from T.A. Heppenheimer, *Countdown: A History of Space Flight*

Asif Siddiqi, “Competing Technologies, National(ist) Narratives, and Universal Claims Toward a Global History of Space Exploration,” *Technology and Culture* 51 no. 2 (2010), 425-443.

Selections from Tom Wolfe, *The Right Stuff*.

March 16 – Bunkers, Bears and Stratofortresses: The Cold War in the Air II

Readings:

H. Bruce Franklin, “Peace is Our Profession: The Bombers Take Over,” in Dominick Pisano, ed., *The Airplane in American Culture*.

Jeremy R. Kinney, *Airplanes: The Life Story of a Technology*, “6. The Jet Airplane as a Military Weapon, 1945-present.”

March 23 – Wings of the World: Civil Aviation in the Post-war World

TERM PAPERS DUE

Readings:

Marc Dierikx, *Clipping the Clouds: How Air Travel Changed the World*, “3. Usage: The Rise and Fall of the Jet Set, 1961-1977” and “4. Effects: Global Travel for All, 1977-present.”

A. Bowdoin Van Piper, *Aviation and Popular Culture*, “4. The Allure of Air Travel.”

March 30 & April 6 – Student Essay Presentations

Readings:

Student Papers