

War and American Society

21H.223 Fall 2002

Fourth Writing Assignment

For this assignment, you should write a short essay of no more than **4 or 5 pages**. It is due in class in **Class #18** unless you make alternate arrangements. As I said in class, I am amenable to a different due date, but I encourage you to choose Class#17 just to give you more time to focus on other classes at the end of term. Any changes in due date must be arranged in advance.

For a variety of reasons, the Vietnam War is often described as an exception in the history of American war. Write an essay in which you consider whether the readings and films that we have considered support or challenge this interpretation.

Do you see continuities between representations of the Vietnam War and previous wars that we have studied? If so, explain what patterns of continuity you see, giving specific examples from different works to support your point.

Or do you see a sharp break in the representations of the Vietnam War? If you take this position, be sure to explain the nature of the differences you see as most important between Vietnam narratives and those of earlier wars, giving specific examples from different works to support your point.

The focus of this essay is primarily on the Vietnam War, but you may choose to write about the Persian Gulf War or the current war in Afghanistan if you think these represent a more significant turning point. If you choose to do this, I will definitely be open to an alternate due date for the paper.