

Scholarly Debates in War Studies

Theme Title	
Critical War Studies	
No of credits (ECTS): 7,5	Course dates: 2025
Course director: Maria Eriksson-Baaz	Examiner: Maria Eriksson-Baaz
The course was reviewed by the Research Committee in War Studies:	2024-10-07
The course was approved by the Director of Studies	2024-10-07

Theme Description
<p>This course provides an overview of the wide field of Critical War (and Military) Studies, which addresses critical, normative and ethical aspects of war and military organizations. The course addresses foundational ideas for war, war making and the military, as well as the technological and material aspects of war and warfare. The course integrates research conducted within the group and is divided into 4 broad themes: thinking war; critical military studies (and militarization); war as experience/experiencing war and critical perspectives on (aspects of) warfare/making.</p>
Learning Outcomes
<p>By the end of the course, the doctoral student should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systematically describe and evaluate the research in the subfield of the research group, with particular focus on the research with the greatest relevance for the own thesis topic - identify, contrast and problematise the scholarly debates in the subfield of the research group - engage critically with the state-of-the-art research in the subfield of the research group - identify the contributions of the student's own research to the subfield of the research group - clearly communicate, both orally and in writing, the content, arguments and conclusions in the course literature and independent analysis
Assessment
<p>The course is examined through active participation in six research group seminars and a written assignment of between 5000-7000 words, in which the doctoral student critically discusses and problematises the debates of the subfield as well as their own contribution to the field. The written assignment should also be presented at the research group seminar.</p>

Readings

Total number of pages: 1530 pages

Thinking War

- Andrä, C. (2022). Problematising war: Towards a reconstructive critique of war as a problem of deviance. *Review of International Studies*, 48(4), 705-724.
- Barkawi, T. (2011). From war to security: Security studies, the wider agenda and the fate of the study of war. *Millennium*, 39(3), 701-716.
- Barkawi, T. (2016). Decolonising war. *European Journal of International Security*, 1(2), 199-214.
- Barkawi, T. (2022). War and decolonization in Ukraine. *New Perspectives*, 30(4), 317-322.
- Bousquet, A. J. (2022). *The scientific way of warfare: Order and chaos on the battlefields of modernity* (pp. 12-33). Oxford University Press.
- Butler, J. (2009). Precarious life, grievable life. In *Frames of war: When is life grievable* (pp. 1-31). Verso.
- Dillon, M., & Reid, J. (2009). *The liberal way of war: Killing to make life live* (Chapters 1, 2 & 3, pp. 1-54). Routledge.
- Gani, J. K. (2021). Racial militarism and civilizational anxiety at the imperial encounter: From metropole to the postcolonial state. *Security Dialogue*, 52(6), 546-566.
- Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2005). *Multitude: War and democracy in the age of empire* (Part 1 on 'War', pp. 1-96). Penguin Publishing.
- Jabri, V. (1996). *Discourses on violence: Conflict analysis reconsidered* (Chapters 1, 4 & 5, pp. 1-28, 90-144). Manchester University Press.
- Jabri, V. (2006). War, security and the liberal state. *Security Dialogue*, 37(1), 47-64.
- Tarrow, S. (2015). *War, states, and contention: A comparative historical study* (pp. 1-28, 239-260). Cornell University Press.
- Tilly, C. (1975). Reflections on the history of European state-making. In C. Tilly & G. Ardant (Eds.), *The formation of national states in Western Europe* (pp. 3-83). Princeton University Press.

War as experience/experiencing war

- Baines, E. K. (2009). Complex political perpetrators: Reflections on Dominic Ongwen. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47(2), 163-191.
- Beck, T. K. (2012). *The normality of civil war: Armed groups and everyday life in Angola* (Vol. 7). Campus Verlag.
- De Jong, S. (2024). Armed with words: (De)colonising translation in the US-led NATO war in Afghanistan (2001-2021). In *Translation and decolonisation* (pp. 119-134). Routledge.

- Deiana, M. A. (2023). Dance as a register of war: Following unruly bodies, affects, and sounds in conflict. *Critical Military Studies*, 9(3), 462-484.
- Honwana, A. (1999). The collective body: Challenging western concepts of trauma and healing. *Track Two: Constructive Approaches to Community and Political Conflict*, 8(1), 6 pages.
- Khan, S. (2023). Heights of madness: Diagnosis, suspicion & military discipline on the Siachen glacier. *Critical Military Studies*, 9(4), 601-618.
- Mangold, M. (2024). Partners in love/war: An explorative study of Ukrainian soldiers' lived experiences of being in a romantic relationship in the Russo-Ukrainian War. *Armed Forces & Society* (online first).
- McSorley, K. (2014). Towards an embodied sociology of war. *The Sociological Review*, 62, 107-128.
- Nordstrom, C. (2004). *Shadows of war: Violence, power, and international profiteering in the twenty-first century* (Vol. 10). University of California Press.
- Sandman, T. (2024). 'The grey everyday of guard duty': Tracing military boredom in field reports of Swedish military chaplains 1940–45. *War & Society*, 1-18.
- Sylvester, C. (2012). War experiences/war practices/war theory. *Millennium*, 40(3), 483-503.
- Utas, M. (2005). West-African warsapes: Victimcy, girlfriending, soldiering: Tactic agency in a young woman's social navigation of the Liberian war zone. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 78(3), 403-430.

Critical Military Studies and militarization

- Åhäll, L. (2016). The dance of militarisation: A feminist security studies take on 'the political'. *Critical Studies on Security*, 4(2), 154–168.
- Basham, V. M., & Bulmer, S. (2017). Critical military studies as method: An approach to studying gender and the military. In *The Palgrave international handbook of gender and the military* (pp. 59–71). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Basham, V. M., Belkin, A., & Gifkins, J. (2015). What is critical military studies? *Critical Military Studies*, 1(1), 1-2.
- Berg, E., & Fredriksson, E. (2024). Don't say peace: Militarisation and the shrinking space for critical voices in the Swedish NATO debate. *Critical Studies on Security* (online first).
- Bilgin, P. (2024). Against Eurocentric narratives on militarism. *Critical Military Studies*, 10(2), 132-136.
- Brooks, R. (2016). *How everything became war and the military became everything* (Part 1 & Part 3, pp. 10-40, 157-244). Simon & Schuster.
- Dietrich Ortega, L. M. (2012). Looking beyond violent militarized masculinities: Guerrilla gender regimes in Latin America. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14(4), 489-507.
- Enloe, C. (2015). The recruiter and the sceptic: A critical feminist approach to military studies. *Critical Military Studies*, 1(1), 3-10.

- Eriksson Baaz, M., & Verweijen, J. (2018). Confronting the colonial: The (re)production of 'African' exceptionalism in critical security and military studies. *Security Dialogue*, 49(1-2), 57-69.
- Henry, M. (2017). Problematizing military masculinity, intersectionality and male vulnerability in feminist critical military studies. *Critical Military Studies*, 3(2), 182-199.
- Howell, A. (2018). Forget 'militarization': Race, disability and the martial politics of the police and of the university. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 20(2), 117-136.
- Leander, A. (2024). Militarization matters: Rhetorical resonances and market militarism. *Critical Military Studies*, 10(2), 147-170.
- Massey, R., & Tyerman, T. (2023). Remaining 'in-between' the divides? Conceptual, methodological, and ethical political dilemmas of engaged research in critical military studies. *Critical Studies on Security*, 11(2), 64-82.
- Stavrianakis, A., & Stern, M. (2018). Militarism and security: Dialogue, possibilities and limits. *Security Dialogue*, 49(1-2), 3-18.
- Wibben, A. T. (2018). Why we need to study (US) militarism: A critical feminist lens. *Security Dialogue*, 49(1-2), 136-148.

Critical perspectives on (aspects of) warfare

- Antrobus, S., & West, H. (2022). "This is all very academic": Critical thinking in professional military education. *The RUSI Journal*, 167(3), 78-86.
- Bousquet, A. J. (2018). *The eye of war: Military perception from the telescope to the drone* (pp. 1-20). University of Minnesota Press.
- Danielsson, A., & Ljungkvist, K. (2023). A choking (?) engine of war: Human agency in military targeting reconsidered. *Review of International Studies*, 49(1), 83-103.
- Der Derian, J. (2009). *Virtuous war: Mapping the military-industrial-media-entertainment network* (Prologue, Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7, pp. xxvii-xxxviii, 23-46, 79-176). Routledge.
- Eriksson Baaz, M., & Stern, M. (2013). The messiness and uncertainty of warring. In *Sexual violence as a weapon of war? Perceptions, prescriptions, problems in the Congo and beyond* (pp. 64-87). Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Gregory, T. (2019). Dangerous feelings: Checkpoints and the perception of hostile intent. *Security Dialogue*, 50(2), 131-147.
- Hoffmann, K., & Verweijen, J. (2019). Rebel rule: A governmentality perspective. *African Affairs*, 118(471), 352-374.
- Holmqvist, C. (2013). War, strategic communication, and the violence of non-recognition. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 26(4), 631-650.
- Larsson, S. (2024). The military academy as a civilizing institution: A historical sociology of the academization of officer education in Sweden. *Armed Forces & Society* (online first).

- Olsson, C. (2019). Can't live with them, can't live without them: "The enemy" as object of controversy in contemporary Western wars. *Critical Military Studies*, 5(4), 359–377.
- Owens, P. (2003). Accidents don't just happen: The liberal politics of high technology 'humanitarian' war. *Millennium*, 32(3), 595–616.
- Sandman, T. (2021). How violence dis/appears in narratives on war-like operations: A conceptual framework. *Critical Military Studies*, 9(3), 285–305.
- Stern, M., & Strand, S. (2024). The aspirational promise of soldiering: An analysis of military recruitment testimonials. *Critical Military Studies* (online first).
- Tängh Wrangel, C. (2024). The biopolitics of algorithmic governmentality: How the US military imagines war in the age of neurobiology and artificial intelligence. *Security Dialogue* (online first).
- Utas, M., & Jörgel, M. (2008). The West Side Boys: Military navigation in the Sierra Leone civil war. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 46(3), 487–511.
- Vogel, C. N., & Musamba, J. (2024). Xerox soldiers, YouTube commanders and Twitter brigades: Information warfare in eastern Congo. *International Affairs*, 100(4), 1381–1404.
- Öberg, D. (2020). Exercising war: How tactical and operational modelling shape and reify military practice. *Security Dialogue*, 51(2-3), 137–154.