

**CLAS 201-01: Classics Seminar**  
**The Drama of War: Athenian Tragedy and Comedy of the Peloponnesian War**

**.5 Course**

**First half of Spring Semester**

**Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-4:45 AM**

**Instructor: Dr. Bob Simmons**

Why was *300* produced when it was? Why *The Dark Knight*? Why *Twelve Years a Slave*? Drama, in its various forms, always reflects an author's preoccupations, and those preoccupations generally include issues and concerns of the time and place when the author's work is created.



“The Drama of War: Athenian Tragedy and Comedy of the Peloponnesian War” is a course focused on examining ways in which the times in which artists do their work affects the content of that work. We will closely study a representative sample of Athenian comedies and

tragedies from the three-decade-long Peloponnesian War, plus scholarship on those plays, in an effort to understand what authorial points of view about events of the time that we might be able to glean from the plays. The period of time under study was one of great upheaval: not only were Athenians anxious because of the lengthy war and bitterly divided attitudes toward it, but also because of a radical shift in approaches to leadership that the city experienced during that time.



Our main emphasis will be on understanding the influences that these Greek authors' preoccupations about the times had on their work. However, the approach we take will nurture in students the analytical tools to understand ways in which art of the present day reveals its influences and points of view on contemporary events as well.