

Terrorism and National Conflict
POLSC-28300
Fall 2017
Saturdays, 12:10-3pm, Room HW1729

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Course Description

This course focuses on various forms of sustained or organized violence that take place within a state, ranging from acts of terrorism conducted by small cells, to insurgencies that involve large numbers of combatants, and that can take years to resolve (if they resolve at all). We begin by considering the slippery distinction between a terrorist, a criminal, and a freedom fighter – and the suspicion that the difference between these is all just a matter of perspective. Having broken down these categories, we then start putting the pieces back together, by considering various trends in violence within states. We will look at circumstances in which violence is likely to break out, who is likely to use violence, and when periods of violence are more likely to end. We will also examine specific ways in which violence is used, such as whether violence is hidden or made public. Throughout the course, we will read recent scholarship on violence, as well as the accounts of those with more direct experience of violence. In covering these topics, we will review very different cases from very different corners of the world, from suicide bombing in the Middle East to counter-insurgency in Central America, and from child soldiers in West Africa to the non-violence of Gandhi.

Course Objectives

By actively participating in this course, you should expect to:

- Become familiar with recent scholarly debates regarding civil war, terrorism, insurgency and counterinsurgency, and organized crime.
- Think critically and constructively about the usual categories and labels that we apply to armed groups and violence.
- Better understand the perspective of those involved in conflict and violence, by reading first-hand accounts of their experiences, and connecting these to scholarly work.
- Improve your research, writing, revising, and critical thinking skills by completing a sequence of group discussions and writing assignments.
- Develop a nuanced understanding of a particular case of sustained violence, by working on a research project throughout the semester.

Assignments and Grading

4 x Reading Assignments = 4 x 10% = **40%**

Paper Proposal (due: October 28) = **15%**

Final Paper (due: December 8) = **30%**

Attendance and Participation = **15%**

Reading Assignments. Students should complete four reading assignments over the course of the semester. Each reading assignment should cover all of the readings for a single week. In the assignment, you should briefly summarize each of the readings, and then offer a short critical comparison of the readings: in what ways do they agree or disagree? Does one reading help you understand the others, etc.? It is completely up to you to decide which weeks you will write about; the only limitation is that everyone will be required to complete their first reading assignment during September – so I can get a sense of how you are thinking and writing. Assignments are due on the day that we discuss the readings, and no late assignments will be accepted. Each reading assignment should be about one page long, single-spaced.

Paper Proposal. The paper proposal is due on October 28. It should provide an outline for, and show your early thinking about your final paper topic. The proposal should be 3 pages long, double-spaced, and include a bibliography of at least 4 works that you will use (bibliography is not included in your page count). The proposal can either be a general summary of the final paper that you want to write, or it can be a rough draft of the introduction and first pages of your final paper. The proposal is due in class, and there will be a penalty for every day that the proposal is late.

Final Paper. The final paper is due on December 8 at 11:59pm. It should be 10 to 12 pages long, double-spaced. The final paper should be submitted through TurnItIn, and there will be a penalty for every day that the paper is late.

Specific instructions for the proposal, and the final paper, will be circulated and discussed in class.

Attendance and Participation. You are expected to attend, and participate in discussion in every class.

Course Expectations

- All readings will be posted to Blackboard. There are no required texts that you need to purchase for this course, but every text on the syllabus and posted on Blackboard is a required reading.
- Arrive on time and prepared for each class. We'll be diving straight into a discussion at the start of each session, so even though we meet on a Saturday, you need to turn up ready to participate. Those that have prepared a reading assignment for the particular class will be asked to take the lead in our discussion each week.
- Students are welcome to use whatever technology is helpful to them in class, but are asked not to do so in a way that will distract other students (or the instructor). Keep everything on silent, and keep the things on your screen relevant (even if we're too polite to say so, we can all see what's on your screen).
- Most readings will be posted on Blackboard, and I will use Blackboard as the main way to contact the class with any announcements or changes to this syllabus. Please make sure that you are checking your Hunter email, or whichever account you have linked to Blackboard. You will also need a Turnitin account, in order to complete the final paper.

- An incomplete grade (INC) is only available under exceptional circumstances, and to students in good standing at the end of the semester (that means that you have been present, participating, and have completed all of your work to date).
- CR/NC is only available to students that have completed all assignments (that includes attendance and participation).
- This course digs deep into some confronting material, and some of the topics covered may be quite uncomfortable or concerning for students. Please read through the syllabus carefully ahead of time, and contact the instructor if you anticipate encountering any problems at some point in the semester. It isn't always possible to see difficult situations coming ahead of time, however, so if any topic or discussion becomes particularly troubling, you are welcome to leave the room and take some time out. Students are encouraged (but never required) to talk to the instructor about any such issues; you will never have to disclose anything that you consider private, but we will be able to make a plan so that you can participate as comfortably as possible in class.

Schedule

1. August 26: Introduction

2. September 2: Freedom Fighter, Criminal, or Terrorist?

- Bhatia, Michael. 2005. "Fighting Words: Naming Terrorists, Bandits, Rebels and Other Violent Actors." *Third World Quarterly* 26, no.1: 5-22.
- Tilly, Charles. 2004. "Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists." *Sociological Theory* 22, no.1: 5-13.
- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2015. "Is ISIS a Revolutionary Group and if Yes, What are the Implications?" *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9, no.4.
- Guevara, Ernesto. *Diaries of Ernesto Che Guevara*. Selections.

3. September 9: Justifications for Violence

- Fanon, Frantz. 2004. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans. Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press. Ch.1, "On Violence."
- Ignatieff, Michael. 2004. *The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in the Age of Terror*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Preface & Ch.1.
- Gandhi, Mahatma. 1996. *Selected Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing. p.41-57.

4. September 16: Conditions for Violence

- Fearon, James & David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil Wars." *American Political Science Review* 97, no.1: 75-90.
- Ross, Michael. 2004. "How do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases." *International Organization* 58, no.1: 35-67.
- Abadie, Alberto. 2006. "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism." *American Economic Review* 96, 2: 50-56.

5. September 23: Who Turns to Violence?

- Humphreys, Macartan & Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no.2: 436-455.

- Sageman, Marc. 2004. *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Ch.4, conclusion.
- Gambetta, Diego & Steffen Hertog. 2016. *Engineers of Jihad: The Curious Connections Between Violent Extremism and Education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Selections. Preface & Ch.1.

September 30: No classes

6. October 7: Why Turn to Violence?

- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch.1, 8.
- Atran, Scott. 2012. "Talking to the Enemy: An Alternative Approach to Ending Intractable Conflicts." *Solutions* 3, no.1: 41-51.
- Beah, Ishmael. 2007. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*. New York: Sarah Crichton Books. Selections.

7. October 14: Is Violence a Man's Game?

- Bloom, Mia. 2011. "Bombshells: Women and Terrorism." *Gender Issues* 28, 1-2: 1-21.
- Alison, Miranda. 2004. "Women as Agents of Political Violence: Gendering Security." *Security Dialogue* 35, no.4: 447-463.
- Viterna, Jocelyn. 2006. "Pulled, Pushed, and Persuaded: Explaining Women's Mobilization into the Salvadoran Guerilla Army." *American Journal of Sociology* 112: 1-45.

8. October 21: How Violence Ends (or Doesn't End)

- Fearon, James. 2004. "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, 3: 275-301.
- Cronin, Audrey. 2006. "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups." *International Security* 31, no.1: 7-48.
- Christia, Fotini. 2012. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Intro.

9. October 28: Indiscriminate vs. Selective Violence

Paper proposal due (in class)!

- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch.1, 7.
- Taussig, Michael. 2003. *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of Limpieza in Colombia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Selections.

10. November 4: Visible vs. Invisible Violence

- Cruz, José Miguel & Angélica Durán-Martínez. 2016 "Hiding violence to deal with the state: Criminal pacts in El Salvador and Medellin." *Journal of Peace Research* 53, 2: 197-210.
- Fujii, Lee Ann. Draft. *Acts of Killing: The Logic of Violent Display*. Ch.5, "Putting on a Show."

- Denyer Willis, Graham. 2017. "Before the body count: Homicide statistics and everyday security in Latin America." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 49, 1: 29-54.

11. November 11: Counterinsurgency and State Terror

- Kilcullen, David. 2010. *Counterinsurgency*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Intro, ch.2.
- Hakimi, Aziz. 2013. "Getting Savages to Fight Barbarians: Counterinsurgency and the Remaking of Afghanistan." *Central Asian Survey* 32, no.3: 388-405.
- Menchú, Rigoberta. 2010. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. London: Verso Books. Selections.

12. November 18: Organized Crime and Narco-terrorism

- Schelling, Thomas. 1971. "What is the Business of Organized Crime?" *The American Scholar* 40, no. 4: 643-652.
- Bunker, Robert. 2011. "Criminal (Cartel & Gang) Insurgencies in Mexico and the Americas: What You Need to Know, Not What You Want to Hear." Congressional testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.
- Lessing, Benjamin. 2015. "The Logic of Violence in Criminal War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, 8: 1486-1516.

November 25: No classes

13. December 2: Suicide Terrorism

- Pape, Robert. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review*, 97: 343-361.
- Gambetta, Diego. 2004. "Can We Make Sense of Suicide Missions?" In *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, edited Diego Gambetta, 259-300. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Asad, Talal. 2007. *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press. Intro & Ch.2.

December 8: Final paper due!

14. December 9: Course Overview

Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures. The Hunter Reading/Writing Center developed this handout on quoting, paraphrasing, and plagiarism: <http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/reading-writing/on-line/qpp.html>.

American Disability Act Policy

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772-4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

- Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).
- All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link:

<http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>

Syllabus Changes

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. Any changes will be explained in class, and the updated version of the syllabus will be posted to Blackboard.