



Liberal Studies HPLS 3019 – Spring 2011 Mass Violence and Genocide

Wednesdays, 6:30-9:15pm

Instructor: Marcus Holmes
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Course website: [Fordham Blackboard](#)
Office hours: Wednesday 5-6pm, Faber 668

Course description: This course examines genocide and other kinds of mass killing in both theoretical and historical perspective. Through an interdisciplinary approach, we will begin by examining and assessing the debate over the concept of genocide: what is genocide? Why is this word loaded with meaning? We then review a range of psychological, sociological, and political perspectives on the causes of genocide and mass killing. Next, through novels, films, and historical accounts, the course examines a number of episodes of genocide and mass killing including the Holocaust, 1994 genocide in Rwanda, mass killings by communist states, and episodes involving the mass killing of civilian populations during war. Finally, the course explores possible measures that the United States and/or the international community might take to limit or prevent genocide and mass killing in the future. For example, should the international community use military force to prevent genocide if necessary? Will institutions like the International Criminal Court help to deter genocide and mass killing? Should the international system respond at all to episodes of mass violence and genocide or may it best to simply let killers go free? None of these questions have obvious answers or easy solutions and therefore have generated spirited debate.

Requirements: Each student is required to complete a take-home midterm, a term paper, and three short informal response essays of around three pages each.

Midterm: The open-book, open-note midterm will be handed out in class on **March 9** and will be due **March 23** by class time. Expectations for the midterm will be discussed in class.

Term Paper: Each student is also required to write one long (approximately 15-20 pages) term paper on a topic of their choosing, in consultation with Mr. Holmes. Outside research is encouraged but not required. **The paper is due by end of day Wednesday, May 11.** Please submit the paper via e-mail with a return receipt to ensure that it is delivered.

Response Essays: Each student is required to write three short and informal response essays that address the readings for that particular class session. The response essays will be sent out to the class before we meet so everyone has a chance to read and reflect on them. The student(s) with a response paper for that day will help to lead the class discussion by providing thought-provoking questions, arguments, etc. The essays will receive a check for satisfactory work, a check plus for extraordinary work, or a check minus for unsatisfactory work. The guidelines for the essays can be found below.

Attendance: **Attendance in class is mandatory** and is a significant factor in calculating your class participation grade. This course is designed to be a high-level topical discussion course, not simply a lecture course. Your participation in the class discussion is a critical part of making the course work. If you are not in class, you cannot participate and therefore each unexcused absence will affect your participation grade.

Grades: The course grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm: 25%

Term paper: 40%

Class participation: 35% (including three response papers, 5% each)

Readings: There are a few texts that should be purchased. All of the books may be purchased at amazon.com or bn.com (among others) new or used.

- 1) Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century*, Cornell University Press, 2004.
- 2) Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna*, Northwestern University Press, 1994.
- 3) Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, Harper, 2007.

All other readings will be available online through Blackboard. If you have trouble accessing a reading, please let me know ASAP so I can make it available, since it is likely that others are having trouble as well.

It is highly recommended that you do the readings in the order they are listed on the syllabus. Many of the readings represent parts of debates that will not make sense if read out of sequence.

Course Policies: Extensions will only be granted for emergency cases and late work will be penalized. All students are expected to arrive to class on time, silence cell phones, iPhones, etc. No “texting” will be tolerated.

All students are responsible for understanding Fordham’s academic integrity rules. These can be reviewed at:

http://www.fordham.edu/academics/colleges_graduate_s/undergraduate_colleg/fordham_college_at_l/studying_at_lincoln/_academic_integrity_23682.asp.

Students are required to read the rules by the end of the first week of classes. Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse if violations occur. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Papers will be submitted to plagiarism detection websites such as turnitin.com if suspected of plagiarism. If you have any questions about the guidelines, please see me.

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Response Essay Guidelines: Your response papers should accomplish two main objectives: **1)** You should briefly summarize the main argument of the authors you have read. Do not simply regurgitate dates, facts, etc. – focus on what you believe to be the main substantive point(s) the authors are trying to make. Many of the sessions in this course are focused on specific debates. Lay out what the authors are debating and the positions of each author. **2)** Respond to those arguments. Do you think the author has proved his/her case? If not, why not? Does the author's argument disagree with other arguments you have encountered in this course? If so, which author(s), if any, do you agree with and why? Does the argument have important moral or political implications? If so what are your thoughts on these questions/implications? Where do you stand on this whole debate? If you had to put a stake down and come out on one side, what would it be? In short, express a carefully considered and original opinion on what you read!

- **Response essays are due via e-mail to the entire class by noon the day before the class is scheduled to discuss the reading.** Assignment dates for response papers will be determined randomly at the beginning of the quarter.
- Your paper should be around 3 pages (defined loosely, but no more than 1000 words).
- Consider the following organization for your paper: summarize the main argument(s) expressed in the reading on the first page of your paper only, use the next two or more pages to respond to it.
- Please make sure that you read all of the assigned materials for the day before writing your response paper. Do not simply respond to one author, but the collection of readings as a whole.
- You will need to email your paper to the entire class by noon the day before we are scheduled to meet to discuss the reading. In addition to attaching your paper to your email, **please copy your paper into the text of the email as well.**
- Late papers will be penalized. Turning your paper in on time is vital since your classmates need time to read it before we meet.

Other Notes: Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. We will make modifications based on the interests of the students and time constraints.

Part 1: Theoretical Approaches to Mass Violence

1. January 19 – Introductions, Overview of Course, Expectations and Setting the Stage

- No class readings for today.
- Film in Class: “The Triumph of Evil” PBS Frontline. The PBS website for the film is worth taking a look at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/>

2. January 26 – What is Genocide and Mass Violence?

- Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, Chapters 2-5.
- Benjamin Valentino, “What is Mass Killing,” from *Final Solutions*, pp. 9-15. (Note: only read these pages for now – the remainder of the chapter is assigned later).
- Browse various definitions of genocide available online.

3. February 2 – Is the Holocaust Unique?

- Steven T. Katz, “The Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Historical Dimension,” in Alan S. Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 19-38.
- David E. Stannard, “Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship,” in Alan S. Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 163-208.
- Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, Houghton Mifflin, pp. 1-15, 103-123, 239-263.
- Film in Class: “Auschwitz: The Nazis and the ‘Final Solution’” (2005)

4. February 9 – Theories of Genocide: Nationalism/Modernity

- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983). Selections.
- Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press). Chapter 1: “Sociology after the Holocaust.”
- Browse through selections from Marina Balina et al, *Endquote: Sots-Art Literature and Soviet Grand Style* (Northwestern University Press, 2000), with particular emphasis on Soviet propaganda pictures.
- Film in Class: “Modern Times” (1936)

6. February 16 – Theories of Genocide: Psychology/Biology

- Chris Wright, “What Chimps Can Tell Us about War with Iraq,” *The Providence Phoenix*, July 16, 2003 (approx 3 pages).
- Steven Pinker, “A History of Violence,” *The New Republic*, March 19, 2007 (2 pages).
- Marilynn Brewer. “The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love or Outgroup Hate?” *Journal of Social Issues*, Fall 1999. (Online)
- Benjamin Valentino, “The Literature on Genocide and Mass Killing,” from *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 15-29.
- Film in Class: “Battleship Potemkin” (1926)

7. February 23 – Theories of Genocide: Ethnicity

- Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 1-16, 185-199.
- Barry Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 1 (Spring 1993), pp. 27-47. (Online)
- Benjamin Valentino, “Ethnic Mass Killing,” from *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 152-195.
- Film in Class: “Underground” (1995)

8. March 2 – Theories of Genocide: Politics

- Barbara Harff, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing the Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 97, no. 1 (February 2003), pp. 57-73. (Online)
- Rudolph J. Rummel, “Chapter 1,” from *Death by Government* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994), pp. 1-28.
- Michael Mann, “The Dark Side of Democracy: The Modern Tradition of Ethnic and Political Cleansing,” *New Left Review*, no. 235 (May/June 1999), pp. 18-45. (Online)
- Film in Class: “Ghandi” (1982) – selected scenes.

10. March 9 – “Ordinary People”?

- Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), pp. 55-77, 159-189.
- Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996), pp. 1-24, 375-415.
- Recommended: Andrew Wolfson, “A Hoax Most Cruel,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, October 9, 2005. And/Or Watch ABC's 20/20 video:
<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=5206567>
- Arthur G. Miller, *The Obedience Experiments: A Case Study of Controversy in Social Science* (New York: Praeger, 1986), pp. 1-19, 37-66, 139-161.
- Phillip Zimbardo et al, “The Psychology of Imprisonment: Privation, Power and Pathology,” in David L. Rosenhan and Perry London, eds., *Theory and Research in Abnormal Psychology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), pp. 270-287.
- Phillip Zimbardo, “Power Turns Good Soldiers Into 'Bad Apples',” *Boston Globe*, May 9, 2004, Sunday p. D11. (2 pages)
- Film in Class: “Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment” (1992)

11. March 16 – No Class, Spring Break

Part II: Empirical Case Studies

12. March 23 – Case Study: Rwanda

- Gérard Prunier, “Chapter 7: Genocide and Renewed War,” from *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 213-265.
- Mahmood Mamdani, “Chapter 7: The Civil War and the Genocide,” from *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 185-233.
- Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 1998). Selections.
- Film in Class: “Hotel Rwanda” (2004)

14. March 30 – Case Study: The Former Yugoslavia

- Norman M. Naimark, "Chapter 5: The Wars of Yugoslav Succession," from *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 2001), pp. 139-184.
- V.P. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994-1995), pp. 130-166.
- Robert M. Hayden, "Schindler's Fate: Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing and Population Transfers," *Slavic Review*, vol. 55, no. 4 (Winter 1996), pp. 727-748.
- Carol S. Lilly, "Amoral Realism or Immoral Obfuscation?" *Slavic Review*, vol. 55, no. 4 (Winter 1996), pp. 749-754.
- Film in Class: "Welcome to Sarajevo" (1997)

15. April 6 – Case Study: The Soviet Union (I)

- Benjamin Valentino, "Communist Mass Killing," from *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 91-117.
- Martin Malia, "Chapter 7: Purge and Consolidation," from *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991* (New York: Free Press, 1994), pp. 227-229, 243-270.
- Paul Hollander, "Soviet Terror, American Amnesia," *National Review*, vol. 46, no. 8 (May 2, 1992), pp. 28-39.
- Jonathan Rauch, "The Forgotten Millions," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 292, Issue 5 (December 2003), p. 27-28.
- Alexander Motyl, "Deleting the Holodomor: Ukraine Unmakes Itself," *World Affairs* September/October 2010.
- Film in Class: "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" (1970)

16. April 13 – Case Study: The Soviet Union (II)

- Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna* (entire).
- Film in Class: "Burnt by the Sun" (1994)

Part III: Interventions

17. April 20 – Why Are Interventions So Unlikely?

- Samantha Power, “Bystanders to Genocide,” *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 288, no. 2 (September 2001), pp. 84-108.
- Alan J. Kuperman, “Rwanda in Retrospect,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 79, no. 1 (January/February 2000), pp. 94-118.
- Alan J. Kuperman, “False Hope Abroad: Promises to Intervene Often Bring Bloodshed,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 1998. (4 pages)
- Benjamin Valentino, “Still Standing By,” *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 1, no. 3 (September 2003), pp. 565-578.
- Jason Zengerle “Student Aid,” *New Republic*, March 20-27, 2006, pp. 12-13.
- Film in Class: “Darfur Now” (2007)

18. April 27 – Conflict Resolution: Do Trials Work?

- Gary Jonathan Bass, “Epilogue: Do War Crimes Tribunals Work?” from *Stay the Hand of Vengeance: The Politics of War Crimes Tribunals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 284-310.
- Payam Akhavan, “Beyond Impunity: Can International Criminal Justice Prevent Future Atrocities?” *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 95, no. 7 (January 2001), pp. 7-31.
- Elizabeth Rubin, “If Not Peace, Then Justice,” (on the ICC in Darfur), *New York Times Magazine*, April 2, 2006, pp. 1-13.
- Film in Class: “Living Together Again in Rwanda?” (2009)

19. May 4 – Other Ideas and Concluding Thoughts

- David Goodman, “Why Killers Should Go Free: Lessons from South Africa,” *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 22, no 2 (Spring 1999), pp. 169-181.
- Helena Cobban, “International Courts: Think Again,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 153 (March/April 2006), pp. 22-28.
- Martha Finnemore, “Legitimacy, Hypocrisy, and the Social Structure of Unipolarity,” *World Politics* 61(1): 58-85 (January, 2009).
- Film in Class: “On a Complicated Hero” (2008)