

**Colloquium on
Political Violence and Terrorism**
Political Science BC 3055

Prof. Kimberly Marten

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Office hours: Mon. 1:30-2:30, Wed. 4-5

Fall 2008
Mondays 11:00am—12:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

What causes political violence and terrorism? How should we define “terrorism”—is it true, as the old saw goes, that one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter? What is the role of religious belief, as opposed to more immediate political goals, in fomenting terrorist action? Are al Qaeda and those linked to it different from terrorists we’ve seen in various places around the world in the past, or does all terrorism and political violence stem from the same variety of goals and purposes? Can governments take effective action to prevent or counter terrorism, or are we all doomed to live in insecurity? What is the proper balance between protection against terrorism and protection of civil liberties?

In this course we will examine these questions through weekly assigned readings, analysis, and discussion. We will look at these questions both comparatively, across many cases, and through in-depth discussion of particular cases. Then each student will examine one or more causal questions related to terrorism, through an independent research paper whose topic will be chosen in consultation with the professor.

Students should leave the course with a well developed understanding of political violence and terrorism. Their analytical skills and understanding of important theories in the literature should be honed by class debates as well as by written assignments, and the major paper assignment should further build students’ research, analysis, and writing skills. One major purpose of the class is to enhance students’ ability to use, criticize, and create causal arguments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Students are **expected to participate regularly in class discussions**, and to demonstrate through this participation that they have completed the assigned readings before class is held.

By 9pm on each Sunday evening before class, each student will **post a two-paragraph response to the assigned readings** on the Columbia Courseworks discussion page. The first paragraph should be a brief summary of what you believe the major points of the

readings are; what has each author tried to say? (On days where there are many different authors, choose a maximum of two or three to summarize.) The second paragraph should be a list of questions that you would like us to discuss in class that day, and a brief explanation of why those questions are interesting to you. Students are expected to have looked at each other's postings before class, and to come prepared to talk about the issues that are raised in them. (The regularity and quality of email postings will be included in the student's course participation grade.)

Three times during the semester, each student will also write a **short (3 to 5-page) essay on the assigned weekly reading**, due at the start of class on the assigned day. Topics will be chosen by students at the second class meeting. Students will also write a **major research paper of at least 25 pages** on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor; this paper will be due at the start of class on the last day of our class, **Dec. 8**. Students will turn in a carefully written, well thought-out **topic statement** (1-2 pages) for this longer paper at the start of class on **Oct. 6**, and an **annotated draft bibliography** (of at least 15 sources) for this paper at the start of class on **Oct. 27**. During the week of **Nov. 17-24**, students must bring a **3-page outline** to Prof. Marten's office, preferably during office hours (otherwise it is the student's responsibility to make the appointment with Prof. Marten), to discuss progress on the paper.

Participation (including email postings): 20%

Three short papers: 10% each (30% total)

Research Paper: 50% total

 Topic statement: 5%

 Annotated bibliography: 5%

 Detailed outline: 5%

 Final paper: 35%

For each written assignment, including weekly email postings, **late turn-ins will be significantly penalized**. Extensions will be given only in the case of illness or family emergency, and you must contact Prof. Marten about the extension before the assignment is due. If you must miss a particular class meeting because of illness, family emergency, or a religious holiday that forbids work, you are expected to inform Prof. Marten beforehand, and to turn in a one-page essay in response to one of the assigned discussion questions for that day, to make up for your missed class participation.

There will be two **extra-credit opportunities**: (1) to view the movie *The Battle of Algiers*, and write a three- to five-page review which ties it to class themes. This review paper is due at the start of class on **Nov. 10**, and the readings for that class should be completed before watching the movie. The movie may be viewed in either the Barnard or Butler library media rooms, and is also widely available via Blockbuster, Netflix, the New York Public Library, etc. See separate handout on movie themes. (2) to view the PBS *Frontline* special, "Spying on the Home Front," and write a three- to five-page review which ties it to class themes. This review paper is due on the last day of reading period, Thursday, **Dec. 11**; a hard copy must be left on Prof. Marten's door by 5pm that day. The film is available at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/homefront/view/>

BARNARD HONOR CODE

All assignments in this class are to be completed in accordance with the Barnard Honor Code. Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources and unpublished sources, used in their writing. Students are encouraged to consult with each other to get feedback as they are writing their major research papers, but no collaboration is allowed when writing the short papers on the assigned readings.

REQUIRED READINGS

Each of the books has been ordered at Book Culture, 536 West 112th Street. Each has also been put on reserve at the Barnard College Library. In addition to the required readings from books, there are a large number of online sources that are required reading.

Crocker, Chester, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007).

Donahue, Laura K. *The Cost of Counterterrorism: Power, Politics, and Liberty* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2003).

Sageman, Marc. *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: U Penn Press, 2008).

Shultz, Richard H., Jr., and **Andrea Dew**. *Insurgents, Terrorists and Militias: The Warriors of Contemporary Combat*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept. 8. Introduction: defining terrorism and its threat.

Article, available from Columbia Library Web:

Charles Tilly, "Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists," *Sociological Theory* 22, no. 1 (Mar. 2004): 5-13.

Web-based reading:

"Dying to Lose: Explaining the Decline in Global Terrorism," chapter 1 (pp. 8-21) of *Human Security Brief 2007*, ed. Andrew Mack, funded by the governments of Canada, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK, available at www.humansecuritybrief.info/access.html.

(Students will be contacted by Prof. Marten before the start of the semester, and asked to read these items before our first class.)

TOPIC I: WHY DOES POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAPPEN?

Sept. 15. Competition for power as a cause of political violence

Leashing the Dogs: Articles by Levy (pp. 17-38), Rotberg (pp. 83-94), King (pp. 115-30), and Mansfield & Snyder (pp. 161-76).

Sept. 22: Economic factors as causes of political violence

Leashing the Dogs: Articles by Collier (pp. 197-218), Stewart & Brown (pp. 219-44), Gleditsch (pp. 177-96), and Malone & Sherman (pp. 637-51).

Sept. 29. Culture and political violence

Leashing the Dogs: Article by Gurr (pp. 131-60).

Shultz and Dew: pp. 1-54, 147-95.

TOPIC II: TERRORISM AS A FORM OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Oct. 6. Terrorists as political goal-seekers.

NOTE: TOPIC STATEMENT DUE AT THE START OF CLASS TODAY.

Articles, available from the Columbia Library Web:

Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (July 1981): 379-99. (Pay special attention to pp. 385 onwards.)

Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 49-80.

Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 78-105.

Oct. 13. Terrorism and religion: prophesy and theater.

Juergensmeyer: entire. Pay special attention to his discussions of terrorism as theater (ch. 7, pp. 119-44), and on gender and terrorism (ch. 10, pp. 187-215). Read at least one of the "major religious traditions" chapters in detail (2-5), and be prepared to discuss how the arguments of ch. 7 and ch. 10 apply to your example.

Oct. 20. Understanding suicide bombers.

Articles, available from the Columbia Library Web:

Scott Atran, "Mishandling of Suicide Terrorism," *Washington Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 67-90.

Bruce Hoffman and Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2004): 243-81.

David Lester, Bijou Yang, and Mark Lindsay, "Suicide Bombers: Are Psychological Profiles Possible?" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2004): 283-95.

Oct. 27. Jihadi terrorism: diffuse network, or defined organization?

NOTE: DRAFT BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT THE START OF CLASS TODAY.

Sageman: entire.

Articles, available from the Columbia library web:

Bruce Hoffman, "The Myth of Grass-Roots Terrorism," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 3 (May/June 2008): 133-8.

Marc Sageman, "The Reality of Grass-Roots Terrorism," and "Hoffman Replies," both in *Foreign Affairs*, 87, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2008): 163-6.

Elaine Sciolino and Eric Schmitt, "A Not Very Private Feud over Terrorism," *New York Times*, June 8, 2008.

Nov. 3: No class meeting; election day holiday. Please vote if you are eligible!!!

TOPIC III: COUNTERTERRORISM

Nov. 10. Interrogation and detention.

NOTE: EXTRA CREDIT PAPER #1 DUE AT THE START OF CLASS TODAY.

Donohue: chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1-121).

Articles, available from the Columbia Library Web:

Bruce Hoffman, "A Nasty Business," *Atlantic Monthly* 289, no. 1 (Jan. 2002): 49-52.

Mark Bowden, "The Dark Art of Interrogation," *The Atlantic Monthly* 292, no. 3 (Oct. 2003): 51-76.

Glenn Frankel, "Prison Tactics a Longtime Dilemma for Israel," *Washington Post*, June 16, 2004.

Nov. 17. Disrupting terrorist finance.

Donohue: chapter 3 (pp. 122-181).

Articles, available from the Columbia Library Web:

Chris Dishman, "Terrorism, Crime, and Transformation," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24, no. 1 (Jan. 2001): 43-58.

Anne L. Clunan, "The Fight against Terrorist Financing," *Political Science Quarterly* 121, no. 4 (Winter 2006/7): 569-96.

Nov. 24. Which works better when: negotiation, or repression?

Shultz and Dew: pp. 103-45.

Articles, available from the Columbia Library Web:

Jane Armstrong, "Fealty to the Kremlin Suits War-Wearied Chechens," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, Feb. 22, 2008.

Matthew B. Arnold, "The U.S. 'Surge' as a Collaborative Corrective for Iraq," *RUSI Journal* 153, no. 2 (April 2008): 24-9.

Peter R. Neumann, "Negotiating with Terrorists," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 1 (Jan./Feb. 2007): 128-39.

Dec. 1. Civil liberties, homeland security, and counterterrorism.

Donohue: chapters 4-6 (pp. 175-360).

Dec. 8. What does the future hold?

NOTE: FINAL PAPER DUE AT THE START OF CLASS TODAY.