

# POP88054: Violence and Political Order

Department of Political Science

Convenor: Liam Kneafsey<sup>1</sup>

Seminar Schedule: TBC

Office Hours: By Appointment In-Person or by Zoom (just email to arrange!)

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## Overview

This class will give students a look into the murky and ambivalent relationship between violence and political order. Most theories of political order begin with the perspective that state institutions set limits on the legitimate use of violence and so control the violent tendencies of an anarchic society. The analysis of political violence typically concentrates on contestation between the state and other parties regarding the legitimate monopoly on the use of violence, as in the case of civil wars. Yet states themselves are also producers of violence. Aside from the obvious case of war between states, states engage in varying levels of everyday violence. In some cases, this violence is perceived as legitimate, as in the use of imprisonment as a punishment for criminal activity. However, the application of 'legitimate' forms of violence may become illegitimate if this application is biased towards certain groups or discriminatory. In other cases, states clearly transgress norms of legitimate violence, engaging in activities such as torture, sexual violence, and even ethnic cleansing. We will read work from history, anthropology, political science, sociology, and criminology.

## Learning Objectives

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Engage with different empirical and theoretical approaches to the analysis of violence and political order
- Develop conceptual, theoretical, and empirical connections across research from political science, international relations, history, sociology, and criminology
- Compare and analyze variation in types of political violence
- Understand and articulate the recursive relationship(s) between violence and political order

## Course Content

This 5 ECTS module course is structured around a set of five seminars (see above) – these seminars focus on **substantive interactive discussion** of the assigned materials. Given the seminar format, it is imperative that students complete the assigned readings for each week – **we can divide up the assignment of the readings depending on class numbers** -; the seminars are 'participatory', in the sense that the opinion of students is sought directly and consistently from the opening to end. Attendance at the seminars is compulsory as it links to credit for the Participation/Discussion Points set out below. Please contact me in advance by email if you

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<sup>1</sup> This course is inspired by and adapted from modules developed by Dr. Paul Kenny and Dr. Shane Mac Giollaí. I would also like to thank Miceal Canavan for very helpful suggestions as well as other previous members of the Violence and Political Order class. I am indebted to them for their help in putting this syllabus together.

cannot make a seminar. I am happy to meet with students to discuss course materials, research papers, and other matters. Please let me know by email and we will set up an appointment.

## Assessment Requirements

**Seminar Participation:** (20%). Everyone is expected to attend every seminar ready to participate and having completed the relevant readings – **again we may divide these based on class numbers**. Students are expected to carry the discussion forward. As course instructor, I will chair and, where necessary, focus the debate and pose questions (see below). Your grade will depend not just on attendance, but **actual participation**. Learning to lucidly articulate an argument about a complex topic amongst a group of your peers *and* learning to listen to and engage with one another (not just waiting for your turn to speak) are some of the key skills you'll develop in graduate school. Practice makes perfect, so speak up and be attentive!

## Discussion Points/Questions (20%)

By 7.00 pm on the day before the seminar every week, students should submit **3 discussion points or questions** to me **in the relevant folder on Blackboard**. Here you are **not** asked to provide a detailed discussion or analysis. You are simply required to raise some interesting points or questions about the week's readings that will form the basis of in-class discussion. These should be in the form of 3 numbered points/questions; each should be at least **a paragraph or two in length but should be no more than two pages in total**. I will be looking for originality in your insights, reference to theoretical debates you have engaged with elsewhere, sharp critiques of the evidence or theory employed, etc. Consider what points/questions will make for an interesting discussion in the seminar. Think of applying questions like: Are the arguments logically coherent? How do the authors defend their cases? Do the papers use qualitative or quantitative evidence and how well executed are the empirical analysis? How do the results/theories/arguments of one paper challenge another? Outline your own critical assessment and elements you believe are worthy of further interrogation.

## Final Assignment (60%)

1. **Read one of the following:** Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*, James Ron. *Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel*, Darius Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide*, Marie Gottschalk, *The prison and the gallows: The politics of mass incarceration in America*.
2. Outline **two** questions on the broad topic of violence and political order that the selected book suggests to you. Explain why these questions emerge from the text and why you think they merit further investigation (500 words).
3. Choose **one** of these questions and detail how you would answer it? Provide all the details found in a good research proposal. (2,500 words)

You should demonstrate not just a critical appreciation of the selected work, but also an understanding of the various scholarly works to which you feel it is related. Thus, you should

refer to additional works or evidence in your answers. The assignment should be approximately 3000 words in length (+/- 10%) excluding notes/bibliography.

**Due Date: TBC.** All late work, unless excused beforehand, will have 5 marks deducted for each day beyond the deadline. Virtually all issues can easily be addressed in advance so it is best to let me know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements that avoid the need for penalties. Assignments are submitted through the Assessments folder on Blackboard which allows for direct submission through Turnitin.

### Academic Dishonesty and Citations

Plagiarism: when you write your assignments, please take care to cite appropriately the source material of your work.

- All students are required to complete an online tutorial on online plagiarism called 'ready, steady, write' (<http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>)
- All students must sign a declaration that they have completed this course when submitting their essay.
- For a comprehensive guide about the different type of plagiarism, please read the University's plagiarism policy here (<http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/levels-and-consequences>)

Of course, in your work, you are expected to draw on existing theoretical and empirical research. All scholarly and journalistic material should be appropriately cited. You may use any citation style you wish, but be consistent in your work. See <http://uncg.libguides.com/content.php?pid=100907&sid=757621>. Chicago (footnote) or APSR (in-text) are the most commonly used styles in political science. Wikipedia, blogs, and other such online sources might be useful as a first step but they should not be relied upon when writing essays.

### Required Texts

Hinton, Alexander Laban. *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide*, Berkeley: University of California Press, (2005).

Pachirat, Timothy, *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*, New Haven: Yale University Press, (2011).

Rejali, Darius M. *Torture and Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, (2007). Gottschalk, Marie. *The prison and the gallows: The politics of mass incarceration in America*. Cambridge University Press, (2006)

**Readings – please note the below is provisional and may be revised/reduced before the module begins but is a good guide on themes and areas we will explore.**

### Week 1: Violence, Anarchy, and the State

Skarbek, David. 2014. *The Social Order of the Underworld How Prison Gangs Govern the American Penal System*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 4.

Cohen, Youssef et. al. 1981. "The Paradoxical Nature of State Making: The Violent Creation of Order" in *American Political Science Review* 75: 901-910.

Herbst, J. 1990. "War and the State in Africa." *International Security* 14(4): 117-39.

### **Week 2: The Disciplinary State**

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press, Introduction, Chapter 3.

Foucault, Michel. 1995. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 2nd ed. New York: Vintage Books, 195-228, 293-308

Gottschalk, Marie. 2006. *The prison and the gallows: The politics of mass incarceration in America*. Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1-2, and 9.

### **Week 3: Torture and the Politics of Sight**

Pachirat, Timothy. 2011. *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*, New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1 and Chapter 9.

Rejali, Darius M. *Torture and Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 20.

### **Week 4: Identity, Violence and the State**

Fearon, James. D. and Laitin, David. D., 2000. Violence and the social construction of ethnic identity. *International Organization*, 54(4): 845-877.

Gerard Prunier. 1995. *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*. New York: Columbia University Press, Chapter 4, Chapter 7.

James Ron. 2003. *Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel*, Berkeley: University of California Press, Preface, Introduction (skim), Chapter 1.

### **Week 5: Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide**

Hinton, Alexander Laban. 2005. *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide*, Berkeley: University of California Press, Introduction (skim), Chapter 5.

Oppenheimer, Joshua. 2013. *The Act of Killing*. Documentary.