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ANTH 12.3/WGST 42.5/AAAS 88.8

# ETHNOGRAPHY OF VIOLENCE

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Winter 15

12 MWF 12:30-1:35 pm; x: Tu 1-1:50 pm

Silsby 317

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## Overview

Violence is widely recognized as a problem in modern society, with policies and interventions to combat violence, or employ it, dominating local and global politics. Yet the meaning of violence is seldom analyzed. Using an ethnographic lens, this course explores violence as both an embodied experience and a culturally and politically mediated event. We examine spectacular and everyday violence forms of violence in terms of manifestations of power, structures of inequality, perceptions of difference, and politics of representation. Ethnographic studies are drawn from, among others, Mozambique, Haiti, and Harlem. An introduction to the cultural anthropology of violence, this course raises key questions about violence in a globalized world and explores how to study it anthropologically.

## Goals

- Describe with confidence some of the key theoretical and methodological approaches of the anthropology of violence.
- Complicate reductive notions of violence—that it is an inherent human trait, a natural male drive, and a quantifiable object—by drawing links between its biological, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions.
- Clearly articulate violence as a social process that structures and is structured by our ideas about ourselves and others.
- Develop an understanding of violence as multi-dimensional, and be able to relate physical, structural, and symbolic forms of violence.
- Make a case for how ethnography can address urgent and sensitive issues.

## Requirements

- **Preparation and Participation—Quizzes** (15% of grade)
- **Mid-Term Exam** (25% of grade)
- **Group Research Project** (60% of grade)

## Format

*Interactive lecture.* Topics and readings will be clarified not through long lectures but rather focused summaries, direct questioning, and guided discussions. Oral participation is mandatory and will provide an opportunity for you to shape the discussion and explore your particular interests.

## Explanation of Course Requirements

## Books

- *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, eds.
- *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*, Malkki
- *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, Bourgois
- *A Different Kind of War Story*, Nordstrom
- Other readings available through library e-reserves or on Canvas.

## Rules

- **RESPECT!**
- No electronic device should be used in class unless you have my permission.
- Uphold Dartmouth's Principles of the Community  
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~deancoll/student-handbook/principles.html>
- Give credit where credit is due.  
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>
- Speak up! If you have any issue (e.g., religious observance, family duties, disability, illness) that hinders your participation in this course, please see me to make arrangements.
- Please be patient with e-mail. I check and respond to e-mail twice daily (around noon and in the evening).

## Milestones

**January 23:** Research Proposal Due

**February 6:** Annotated Bibliography and Section Outlines Due

**February 13:** Mid-term Exam

**February 18:** Draft for Peer Review Due

**March 8 & 9:** Presentations

**March 13:** Final Paper Due

**I. Preparation and Participation—Monte Carlo Quizzes** (15% of grade). The success of this class depends on your preparation and participation. I will evaluate your preparation based on in class commentary and a series of Monte Carlo quizzes that will be assessed on a four-tier “check” scale, providing constructive feedback as needed. *Rules:* A Monte Carlo quiz is like other pop quizzes, except that the decision to administer the quiz, the particular question posed, and the particular reading under scrutiny are determined by chance. At the start of class, a student will roll a die. If the student rolls a 1 or 3, a quiz will be given. A second roll will indicate which question will be answered, and a third will determine which reading will be the subject of the quiz. The quiz will be open book, and you can use your notes. You will have *five minutes* to complete the quiz. Answers will be graded as follows: (1) check plus: your answer is clearly formulated, accurate, and demonstrates a sound understanding of the reading/concepts; (2) check: your answer is mostly correct, demonstrates some familiarity with reading, but is incomplete or awkwardly formulated; (3) check minus: the answer is partially correct, demonstrates minimal familiarity with reading, or is poorly formulated; (4) zero: the answer demonstrates no familiarity with the reading. To help you read actively and prepare for the quizzes, one of the following questions will be asked:

1. What is the most important point of the reading? Why? Be sure to indicate the primary argument and any ancillary points.
2. How would you compare or relate this reading assignment to another reading in the course? The other reading may be from the same or another day. You should provide sufficient details to explain your comparison.
3. I will give you one idea or concept in the reading, and you will clearly define or describe it. Then, indicate how it applies to a conflict or situation discussed in the course or happening in the world.
4. What critique would you give the author? Develop a critical response to some aspect of the reading, giving evidence for why you agree or disagree with the author. Your critique may be positive or negative, and your evidence may be based on personal experience, observations of others, or academic scholarship.
5. What is the key insight this reading offers for an understanding of violence? Use the syllabus headings for the week and day to relate this reading to a major theme in the course.
6. Student’s choice: answer any of the five questions.

*Missed classes.* Daily attendance is imperative. I will excuse one absence. If you miss additional classes, you will forfeit any quizzes. If you do not miss any classes, you may drop your lowest quiz grade.

**II. Mid-Term Exam** (25% of grade). There will be a mid-term exam. The exam will consist of multiple choice and very short (3-sentence) answers to questions that demand connections across the readings.

**III. Group Research Project** (60% of grade). Each student will participate in writing a group research paper that develops a concept or analytical frame in relation to a conflict or violent situation in a specific place or region. Potential concepts or frames include, but are not limited to: gender, race/ethnicity, class/poverty, state/power, emotion, and hierarchy/status. This paper must be an original paper prepared for this course only. Three to four students will be in each group. You should come to a consensus on the topic of enquiry and the area under study as a group. You should decide on a group dynamic that works for you, choosing a leader or developing a model of consensus to organize the workflow. Each paper will contain the following components: title page, abstract, main text, and references. The main text of the paper should be about 20 pages long (double-spaced, 12pt font, 1” margins). Formatting of the paper (including citations and references) should correspond to the AAA style guide, which is available on Canvas. Successful papers are the product of multiple steps. This paper will include:

1. Research Proposal (5%): The research proposal (2-3 pages) will include: (i) *Statement of the topic:* a description of what you will examine, where in the world you will situate the analysis, and how you will go about the analysis; (ii) *Purpose:* Explain why this topic and your particular analysis of it is significant for anthropology as a discipline and/or the scholarly or policy treatment of the topic; (iii) *Disclaimers:* Detail the boundaries of your paper within the time constraints and space you have been allotted. Tell us what you will not or do not have time/space to include in the paper. (iv) *Schedule:* Outline your work schedule, with specific project activities and group meetings. Demonstrate how you will collectively manage the tasks necessary to complete this project.
2. Individual Section Outline and Group Annotated Bibliography (10%): As a group, you should assign each member of the group a section of the paper to complete. Each person will submit a statement of the section they have been assigned and an outline of how they envision organizing that section (1 to 2 pages). The group will also submit an

annotated bibliography. The bibliography should include around 15 published academic pieces that will be the main sources you will draw upon in your paper. In your annotations, you will explain how and why this source is relevant to your paper. More details to follow in class.

3. **Peer Review (10%):** Each group will submit a *complete* draft of the paper for peer review, and each group will be required to read another group's paper for peer review. Detailed instructions will be given in class.
4. **Final Paper (25%):** The final paper is due on the last day of finals.
5. **Poster Presentation (10%):** The final day of class will be dedicated to poster presentations. Posters are tools for presenting research in a visually compelling way. Your poster should include introduction to the topic, a review of literature, a presentation of your argument, and a conclusion that links your argument to its scholarly or policy implications. You must also include a works cited section. All these components should be image-based and reflect your creativity. Further guidance will be given in class.

**\*\*Teaching Assistance.** Anna Lasala-Goettler, an MA student in the Comparative Literature program will be serving as our course TA. Anna is available to help you with questions related to course readings, assignments, and research. She will also lead class discussions on Ferguson, MO and campus culture and sexual assault, and she welcomes questions on these topics and others. Feel free to contact her directly with questions or to schedule an appointment [Anna.H.Lasala-Goettler.GR@dartmouth.edu]. Her office hours and meeting place will be announced shortly.

**\*\*Library Research Assistance.** Amy Witzel, Baker-Berry's anthropology bibliographer, can help with library research at any stage of your project. She has created a general research guide <http://libguides.dartmouth.edu/anthropology>, but feel free to contact her directly with questions or to schedule an appointment [Amy.L.Witzel@dartmouth.edu].

## Course Schedule

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Readings are listed in the order they should be read. Key: VWP=*Violence in War and Peace*; E/C= on e-reserve or Canvas

### ***Week One: Grand Origin Stories, or the Problem of Inevitability***

**Monday, January 5: Introduction: Moving from *Why* to *How*?**

**Wednesday, January 7: Evolutionary Tales**

Chagnon, Napoleon, Life Histories, Blood Revenge, and Warfare in a Tribal Population (E/C)

**Friday, January 9: Discussion on The Most Controversial Anthropologist**

Lizot, Jacques, On Warfare: An Answer to Napoleon Chagnon plus select articles (E/C)

### ***Week Two: The Will to Kill: Order, Status, Emotion***

**Monday, January 12: Emotion**

Hobbes, Thomas, Of The Naturall Condition of Mankind, as Concerning their Felicity, and Misery (E/C)

Rosaldo, Renato, Grief and a Headhunter's Rage (VWP)

**Wednesday, January 14: Obedience and Honor**

Milgram, Stanley, Behavioral Study of Obedience (VWP)

Hinton, Alexander Laban, Why did you Kill? The Cambodian Genocide and the Dark Side of Face and Honor (VWP)

**Friday, January 16: Banality of Evil**

Arendt, Hannah, From Eichman in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (VWP)

Film *Act of Killing* by Joshua Oppenheimer (stream at home)

### ***Week Three: Violence and the Making and Unmaking of State Power***

**Tuesday, January 20 (x-hour): Violence for the State**

Fanon, Frantz, Concerning Violence

FILM: *Battle of Algiers* by Gillo Pontecorvo (stream at home)

**Wednesday, January 21: Violence by the State**

Arendt, Hannah, From On Violence (VWP)

Feldman, Allen, On Cultural Anesthesia: From Desert Storm to Rodney King (E/C)

**Friday, January 23: Discussion on Ferguson, MO** (select readings) *\*Research Proposal Due\**

***Week Four: Ethnic Conflict and the Polity***

**Monday, January 26: Narration and Nation**

Malkki, Liisa, Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania. (Intro, Ch. 2; Pp. 1-18, 52-104)

**Wednesday, January 28: Categorical Others**

Malkki, Liisa, Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania. (Ch. 3, 6, and postscript; Pp. 105-152; 232-297)

**Friday, January 30: War on Terror**

Chomsky, Noam, The New War Against Terror: Responding to 9/11 (VWP)

Mahmood, Mamdani, Good Muslim, Bad Muslim (E/C)

Lutz, Catherine, Making War at Home in the U.S. (E/C)

***Week Five: Cycles of Violence in Urban America***

**Monday, February 2: Structuring Violence**

Bourgois, Philippe, In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio (Intro, plus chapters 1-4)

**Wednesday, February 4: Engendering Violence**

Bourgois, Philippe, In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio (chapters 5-9)

**Friday, February 6: No class \*Outlines and Annotated Bibliography Due by Canvas\***

***Week Six: Structural Inequality and Violence***

**Monday, February 9: Internalizing Domination as Discipline**

Foucault, Michel, Right of Death and the Power over Life (E/C)

Redfield, Robert, Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis (E/C)

**Wednesday, February 11: Suffering as Violence**

Farmer, Paul, On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below (VWP)

Kivland, On Accidental Recoveries and Predictable Disasters (E/C)

Showing of Mozayik by Jonathan Bougher, Haldeman 041 at 4:30 pm

**Friday, February 13: Mid-term Exam**

***Week Seven: The Force of Gender***

**Monday, February 16: Symbolic Violence**

Bourdieu, Pierre, Gender and Symbolic Violence (VWP)

Cohn, Carol, Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals (E/C)

**Wednesday, February 18: Symbolic Resistance**

Feldman, Allen, Eschatology (E/C)

Aretxaga, Begona, The Dirty Protest: Symbolic Overdetermination and Gender in Northern Ireland Ethnic Violence (E/C)

**\*Draft for Peer Review Due by Canvas to Partner Group\***

**Thursday, February 19 (x-hour) or another time: Peer Review Meetings**

**Friday, February 20: Discussion of Campus Culture and Sexual Assault** (select articles: E/C)

*Week Eight: Historical Repertoires of Violence and Nonviolence*

**Monday, February 23: The Case of Mozambique's "Civil" War**

Nordstrom, Carolyn, A Different Kind of War Story (Ch. 1-3)

**Tuesday, February 24 (x-hour):** Visit to the Hood for half of class

**Wednesday, February 25: Creativity and Recovery**

Nordstrom, Carolyn, A Different Kind of War Story (Ch. 4-8)

**\*Peer Review Comments and Reflections Due\***

**Friday, February 27:** Visit to the Hood for other half of class

*Week Nine: Doing Ethnography of Violence*

**Monday, March 2: Fieldwork Under Fire**

Swedenburg, Ted, With Genet in the Palestinian Field (E/C)

Zulaika, Joseba, The Anthropologist as Terrorist (E/C)

**Wednesday, March 4: Anthropology and the Military**

Gonzalez, Roberto, Towards Mercenary Anthropology? The New US Army Counterinsurgency Manual FM 3-24 and the Military Anthropology Complex (plus comments by Montgomery McFate and David Kilcullen) (E/C)

Select journalistic readings (E/C)

**Friday, March 6: Final Paper Presentations**

*Week Ten*

**Monday, March 9: Final Paper Presentations**

**Friday, March 13: \*Final Papers Due and Peer Evaluations Due\***