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HSTR 272E.01: Terrorism - Violence in the Modern World

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Spring 2017

Richard Drake

Syllabus for Terrorism in the Modern World (HSTR 272E)

Objectives of the Course

In its annual edition of *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, the United States Department of State has acknowledged that “No one definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance.” The term poses serious semantic difficulties. Terrorism is generally held to be political violence that is illegitimate, but what confers legitimacy on some acts of political violence and illegitimacy on others? Is terrorism simply the name we give to the violence we do not like or support, while finding euphemisms for the violence we do like or support? This is the morally problematic approach that I take throughout the course, beginning with the 1793-1794 Reign of Terror in France and ending with major episodes of contemporary terrorism in both its state and group forms.

Classroom Manners

“Life is short, but there is always time for courtesy.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Emerson believed, as I do, that manners matter a great deal in life. Insofar as our course is concerned, I expect a relationship of reciprocal courtesy to exist between us. For my part, I will take all my teaching responsibilities with the utmost seriousness. In return, you need to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and to study hard. In addition, I expect you to come to class on time, to stay for the entire lecture, and to refrain from all forms of behavior that might distract me or the students around you. I begin lecturing on the hour, and I expect students to be seated by then. Please do not talk with your neighbors or read newspapers during the lecture. Turn off your cell phones. Try to have breakfast before class. The lecture hall is not a dining room or a coffee house. It is imperative that we create and maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning.

Required Readings

Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (Harper)
Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (Oxford University Press)
Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* (Bantam)
Mark Danner, *Massacre at El Mozote* (Knopf)
Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (Penguin)
Osama bin Laden, *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*,
ed. by Bruce Lawrence (Verso)
Articles on the Reserve Shelf

Copies of all or most of these books are on the Reserve Shelf in the Library under my name and the course number.

Required Films

Danton

The Battle of Algiers

American History X **or** *If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Movement*

The films make up a vital component of this course. They all will be available on the course Moodle shell.

President's Lecture Series

Speakers and topics to be announced in class. For information about the lecture series, go to <http://umt.edu/president/eveents/lectures>

Grading Policy

I will give three unannounced short-answer quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will be worth approximately 10 percent of the semester grade. There also will be three examinations in the course. Each will be worth approximately 30 percent of the semester grade. The examinations will consist of both essay and short answer questions. The final examination will not be cumulative. If you are unable to take the examinations at the scheduled times, see me about a make-up. Quizzes cannot be made up at a later date. Graders will assist me with the quizzes and examinations. They will be available for consultation with students after each of the quizzes and the first two examinations. Before each examination, I will post review outlines on the Moodle shell.

I set great store by students who demonstrate a capacity and eagerness for growth as readers and writers.

The required articles for this course are available on the Moodle shell.

For students who take the course on a Pass/Not Pass basis, the minimum grade for a Pass is "C."

If you take an incomplete in the course, you will have one year in which to finish all requirements before the "I" becomes an "F." Students should take care of incompletes as soon as possible.

Students who have need of the Disability Services Center should make certain that they are properly registered there. Let me know which special arrangements you will require for the examinations.

I regard plagiarism in any form as the sin against the Holy Ghost. Please consult the Student Conduct Code for a description of the penalties that will result from cheating. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Office Hours

My office hours for the semester are MWF 10-11 in University Hall 314. If you are not free at those times, please see me about making an appointment at a mutually convenient hour. You can reach me by telephone at 243-2981. My e-mail address is richard.drake@umontana.edu.

Lectures, Film Showings, and Reading Assignments

Week 1

M	23 January	Introduction
W	25 January	Theories about Terrorism
F	27 January	Eric Hoffer, <i>The True Believer</i>

Week 2

M	30 January	The French Revolution and the Beginning of Modern Terrorism: Maximilien Robespierre (In conjunction with this lecture, the film <i>Danton</i> will be discussed. You can find the film on the Moodle shell).
W	1 February	The Legacy of Terrorism in Napoleonic Europe: Francisco Goya's "Disasters of War" (Slide Lecture)
F	3 February	Anarchism and the Propaganda of the Deed

Week 3

M	6 February	Joseph Conrad, <i>Under Western Eyes</i>
W	8 February	Marxist-Leninism and Terror: <i>The Black Book of Communism</i> Debate
F	10 February	The Stalinist Terror

Week 4

M	13 February	Arthur Koestler, <i>Darkness at Noon</i>
W	15 February	Fascism and Terror (Slide Lecture)
F	17 February	Nazism and Terror

Week 5

M	20 February	Holiday
W	22 February	The Final Solution
F	24 February	First Examination (A review outline for this examination will be posted on the Moodle shell)

Week 6

M	27 February	Terrorism in Latin America: An Overview
W	1 March	The “Disappeared” of Argentina
F	3 March	Mark Danner, <i>Massacre at El Mozote</i>

Week 7

M	6 March	Peru: The Shining Path
W	8 March	Terrorism in the Middle East: The Historical Background
F	10 March	Israeli Perspectives

Week 8

M	13 March	Arab Perspectives
W	15 March	Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt
F	17 March	The Historical Background of Shi’ite Radicalism in Iran

Spring vacation 20-24 March

Week 9

M	27 March	The Thought of the Ayatollah Khomeini (Reading: selected articles from <i>Islam and Revolution</i> available on the Moodle shell)
W	29 March	Ahmed Rashid, <i>Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia</i>

	F	31 March	Second Examination (A review outline for this lecture will be posted on the Moodle shell).
Week 10			
	M	3 April	The FLN in Algeria (In conjunction with this lecture, the film <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> will be discussed. You can find the film on the Moodle shell).
	W	5 April	Islamic Fundamentalism in Algeria
	F	7 April	The Case of Muammar al-Qaddafi in Libya
Week 11			
	M	10 April	The Tragedy of Rwanda Today
	W	12 April	Terrorism in Europe: An Introduction
	F	14 April	Italian Terrorism: (Reading: Drake, "The Children of the Sun" and "Italy in the 1960s: A Legacy of Terrorism and Liberation" can be found on the Moodle shell)
Week 12			
	M	17 April	The Baader-Meinhof Gang and Neo-Nazism in Germany
	W	19 April	The ETA in Spain
	F	21 April	"The Damnable Question:" Terrorism in Ireland
Week 14			
	M	24 April	Terrorism in the United States: The Historical Background
	W	26 April	The Case of the Weather Underground
	F	28 April	Terrorism in the United States Today (In conjunction with this lecture, the film <i>American History X</i> will be discussed; alternatively, students may choose to see <i>If a Tree Falls: A</i>

Story of the Earth Liberation Movement, which will be discussed. Both films can be found on the Moodle shell).

Week 15

M	1 May	The War on Terror (Reading: Selections to be announced from Osama bin Laden).
W	3 May	“Blowback:” U.S. Foreign Policy and Terrorism
F	5 May	Conclusions (A review outline for this lecture will be posted on the Moodle shell)

Final Examination: Tuesday, 9 May 10:10-12:10 ULH 101