

Political Science 318
Fall 2005
The Comparative Study of Genocide
Professor Scott Straus

LECTURE

1111 Humanities
Tuesdays/Thursdays 1-2:15

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesdays 3:30-5:30 pm
224 North Hall
ssStraus@wisc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the origins and forms of what a legal scholar once called the world's most "odious scourge": genocide. For years, genocide mainly referred to the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews during World War II. However, recent events in Eastern Europe, Central Africa, and elsewhere have drawn scholars' attention to genocide as a generic political phenomenon that may be studied across regions and time periods. This course is designed to introduce students to the major debates surrounding the study of genocide: how should genocide be defined? Is genocide primarily an international crime belonging to courts and tribunals or is it a macro-social event that social scientists can study? What are the major theories explaining genocide and how effective are these theories? Is every case unique or do all the cases demonstrate consistent patterns? Finally, how might genocide be prevented? The course will draw attention to these questions through the study of particular cases: in particular, the Holocaust, Rwanda, Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, and the experience of Native Americans in this country. We also will examine, briefly, recent events in Darfur and the Armenian genocide. Although moral concerns will underlie the discussion of each case, our main objective will be to examine the causes of genocide.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003)

Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* (New York: Picador, 1998).

Samantha Power, *'A Problem from Hell': America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

David Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

Loung Ung, *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The formal assignments for the class are the following: an in-class midterm examination, a research paper, and a final examination. Students are expected to attend all lectures and to keep up with weekly reading assignments. During the semester, I also will give two to three short reading quizzes.

TERM PAPER

You will have a choice on the paper assignment. Either you may respond to a question that I provide or you may write on a topic of your choosing. If you choose the latter, you must submit a short proposal (one to two paragraphs in length) four weeks before the paper is due. The proposal must be approved by either the Instructor or the Teaching Assistant. The final paper should be 8-10 pages in length, double-spaced with 12-point font. Your name, the date, and the course number should be at the top of every sheet of the paper. Staple all pages. Papers are due at the beginning of class on December 6th. No late papers will be accepted unless you document an emergency.

GRADING

Mid-Term examination: 25%

Paper: 30%

Final Examination: 35%

Reading Quizzes: 10%

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Ann Fishback Rivlin will be the teaching assistant for the course. Ann will hold office hours Tuesday 11:45 to 12:45 and Thursday 2:30 to 3:30, or by appointment, in North Hall 121. Her e-mail address is: fishback@polisci.wisc.edu. Ann will be responsible for most grading in the course.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Given the number of students enrolled in the class, there will be little allotted time for open discussion. However, should you have a question about the reading or lecture, please raise your hand and pose the question when called upon. I will expect you to demonstrate a common level of respect for your classmates and the instructor when speaking.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All work must be your own. Undocumented borrowing of someone else's work or ideas is plagiarism, an academic crime that results in disciplinary action. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, I will report the offense and expect to fail you in the class.

E-RESERVES

In addition to the books for sale, I have placed a number of required and recommended readings on e-reserve, which can be accessed through your "My-UW" account. If you encounter any problems accessing or printing the articles on e-reserve, please seek help at the reference desk of the College Library or through the reserves desk itself (262-3192).

Course Outline and Schedule

I. INTRODUCTION AND A CONTEMPORARY CASE STUDY

September 6: Introduction

September 8: Darfur

Caroline Moorehead, "Letter from Darfur," *The New York Review of Books*, August 11, 2005, pp. 55-57.

Samantha Power, "Dying in Darfur: Can the Ethnic Cleansing in Sudan Be Stopped?" *The New Yorker*, August 30, 2004 (on-line).

Nelson Kasfir, "Sudan's Darfur: Is It Genocide," *Current History* (May 2005), pp. 195-202 (on-line).

Recommended

Scott Straus, "Darfur and the Genocide Debate," *Foreign Affairs* (on-line).

II. Definitions of Genocide

September 13: Rafael Lemkin and the U.N. Genocide Convention

September 15: Definitions of Genocide and Their Problems

Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, pp. 1-85.

III. THEORIES OF GENOCIDE

September 20: Macro Theories

Eric Weitz, "The Modernity of Genocides," in Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide*, pp. 53-73 (on-line).

Rudolph Rummel, "Chapter 1," from *Death by Government* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994), pp. 1-28 (on-line).

September 22: Macro Theories (cont)

Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp 66-90 (on-line).

Michael Mann, "The Dark Side of Democracy," *New Left Review* 235 (1999), pp. 18-45 (on-line).

Recommended

Matthew Krain, "State-Sponsored Mass Murder: The Onset and Severity and Genocide and Politicide," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41:3 (1997), pp. 331-360 (on-line).

September 27: Micro Theories

Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 1-12 (on-line).

James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 29-49 (on-line).

Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 13-34 (on-line).

Recommended

James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 55-87.

Dan Stone, "Genocide as Transgression," *European Journal of Social Theory* 7 (1): 45-65 (2003), pp. 45-65 (on-line)

September 29: Micro Theories (cont)

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996), pp. 1-24 (on-line).

Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), pp. 55-77, 159-189 (on-line).

IV. THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

October 4-6

Rouben Paul Adallian, "The Armenian Genocide" in Samuel Parsons, ed. *Century of Genocide* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 53-90 (on-line).

Daniel and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 78-93 (on-line).

V. THE HOLOCAUST: THE PARADIGMATIC CASE OF GENOCIDE

October 11-13

Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide*, pp. ix-130

October 18-20

Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide*, pp. 131-220

**** IN-CLASS MID-TERM OCTOBER 25**

VI. CAMBODIA UNDER THE KHMER ROUGE

October 27

Start Loung Ung, *First They Killed my Father*.

November 1-3

Loung Ung, *First They Killed my Father*, read through p. 174.

VII. THE BALKANS CRISIS

November 8-10

Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, pp. 247-329

November 15

Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, pp. 391-442

VIII. RWANDA

November 17, 22

Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, pp. 5-100.

November 29

Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, pp. 101-171.

IX. NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE US

December 1

David Stannard, *American Holocaust*, pp. 57-147 (including pix)

December 6

Guest Lecture by Professor Dennis Dresang on American Indians in Wisconsin.

**** TERM PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS DECEMBER 6**

December 8

David Stannard, *American Holocaust*, pp. 149-193.

X. DILEMMAS OF INTERVENTION

December 13: Kosovo and Beyond

Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, pp. 443-516

XI. CONCLUSION

December 15: Wrap-Up and Review for Final

XII. FINAL EXAMINATION

December 19, 2:45 p.m