Course Description
Violence has been a central object of study for anthropologists, and social concern throughout the ages. Over the course of the semester, we will examine overt and extraordinary forms of violence, and consider as well the significance of its discreet and everyday expressions. To this end, we will explore scholarship on phenomena ranging from war, ethnic conflict and genocide, to neglect, exclusion and exposure to harm to inquire: What is violence? How does violence emerge and reproduce? How do different labels or categories – neglect, harm, discipline, civilian justice – affect our understanding of violent phenomena and the social relations they index? What can ethnography offer to our understanding of it? How can we as anthropologists develop effective tools to study a phenomenon that manifests from the intimacy of the family to the indifference of global actors and deterritorialized institutions?

With these questions in mind, the course is organized around three major goals. Part I, “Theories on the Ontology of Violence,” offers an overview of key ideas and theories on violence developed by major figures in the social sciences cannon. In Part II, “Ethnographies of Violence,” students will be able to examine how contemporary ethnographers have approached the issue in their writing and analysis. Finally, Part III, “Violence in Ethnographic Practice,” is devoted to practical concerns of engaging in fieldwork in places characterized by conflict or with subjects marked by it. Through this final section I hope to elicit a conversation regarding methodologies, frameworks, positionality and voicing that may prepare students to better contextualize and conceptualize issues of violence, conflict, trauma, and justice in their own research.

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of the course, students will
• Become familiar with fundamental concepts, paradigms, and debates that have shaped our understanding of violence, within anthropology and the social sciences, as well as more broadly.
• Develop the necessary conceptual background and analytic insight to articulate and undertake their own examination of contemporary forms of violence.
• Develop a critical understanding of the challenges, limitations and advantages of undertaking ethnographic research in sites marked by conflict, violence and neglect; and be able to apply that knowledge to enhance their own research design and data collection practices.
## COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

### Assignments & Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Question/Participation</td>
<td>300 points</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion/Facilitation</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Sketch</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>150 points</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>100 Points</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revisions &amp; self-critique statement</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Op-Ed Draft</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Op-Ed Final</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td><strong>Total points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Grading scale:**

A: 1000-900, B+: 899-850, B: 800-849, C+:750-799

**Policy on Incomplete Grades:** To encourage students not to fall in the trap that “Incomplete” grades represent, “temporary” grades will be issued instead. “T” grades will be based on the total points the student accumulates by the end of the semester (e.g. TB, TB-, TC). Temporary grades become permanent by the end of the semester that follows the course.

### Due Dates (Chronologically):

- Discussant Role Sign Up: 1/30
- Paper Sketch: 3/24
- Paper: 4/21
- Peer Reviews: 4/24 (in class)
- Op-Ed Draft: 4/28
- Revision & Self-Critique Statement: 5/13
- Op-Ed Revised: 5/13

**Weekly Question, Attendance & Participation (30%)**

**Due:** Wednesday prior to class by 5:00 p.m., via Sakai

Each student will submit a critical question that engages or arises from the readings for that week. Students should contextualize their questions, but keep their submissions short (approx. 300 words approx). The caliber of submissions should demonstrate that the required reading has been completed, and that the student has given the authors’ arguments careful consideration.

In the interest of giving discussants time to prepare, points will be progressive deducted for late assignments in the following fashion: Assignments time-stamped on or before 5:00 p.m. will receive 20 points, 15 points if time-stamped between 5:00 and 5:59, 10 points if they are submitted after 6:00 p.m. No submissions will be accepted after 6:30 p.m. Early submissions are highly encouraged.

**Discussant Role (10%)**

**Due:** Variable, twice per semester, 50 points per assigned discussion.

Two or three students will serve as peer discussants for each class. Each of these students will go over the questions submitted, consider them collectively, and identify common issues, threads, or blind spots. Discussants should come to class prepared to present their thoughts on the points raised by their peers, and, if and when appropriate, help stir the discussion in directions that may address or advance those concerns.
Paper Project
Students will work on a paper that engages the authors and issues discussed in class, but that is directly to their research topic and stage of training. Each student will negotiate the parameters and framework of his/her project with the instructor individually and no later than the third week of classes. The paper project will include the following assignments:

Paper Sketch (50 points, 15%)
Due: March 24th via Sakai dropbox
Paper sketches should include a paper abstract, a tentative outline, and a brief annotated bibliography including texts from the class.

Paper (150 points, 15%)
Due: April 21st via Sakai dropbox for circulation with all class members
The specific scope and parameters of each paper will be negotiated individually, but in general, the text of should not exceed 4000 words (approximately 10-12 pages of text). Endnotes should be kept at a minimum (400 words at most). The bibliography and citation style should correspond to the student’s discipline. Anthropology students are expected to use the American Anthropological Association citation style (available at the AAA website). Papers should be submitted in 12-point font, using double spacing, 1” margins, include a title and page numbers.

Please note that your peers will be reading your paper and that this is the only version of this paper that the instructor will read, so turn in your best work.

Peer Review (100 points, 10%)
Due: April 24th in class
Each student will be assigned to review the papers of 3-4 of their peers. While students are free to provide as much feedback as they would like, they are expected to (1) write a brief statement assessing the strengths and weaknesses of overall argument and its argumentation, (2) offer suggestions for improvement identifying key problems or issues that stand to be strengthen, (3) provide specific suggestions or comments on the text (marginalia).

Revision Statement & Self-Critique (100 points, 10%)
Due: May 13th
This should take the form of a hypothetical resubmission letter. In the space of a couple of pages, students should outline how they would improve their texts, address the critiques levied by their peers and justify their decisions to follow or dismiss suggestions.

Op-Ed Draft (20%):
Op-Ed Draft Due: April 28th (100 points)
Revised Op-Ed Due: May 13th (100 points)
During the course of the semester, students will write a short critical essay that closely aligns with their Paper Project but which is intended for a broader audience. Essays should present well-reasoned, compelling arguments that illustrate an anthropological approach to the issue or topic selected. These short, critical essays should follow the New York Times format for op-ed submissions and be roughly 750 words in length.

Examples of Op-Eds written by anthropologists:
http://www.aaanet.org/issues/Member-Op-Eds.cfm
Also read, “Op-Ed and You” by Trish Hall:
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/14/opinion/op-ed-and-you.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism. At the most basic level, don’t cheat, don’t lie, don’t steal, don’t sabotage your learning or the learning of others, and don’t aid and abet anyone who engages in any or all of these practices. The University’s established course of action will be followed without hesitation in case of violations. If you have any questions, please see me and consult Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.

Attendance & Preparedness. The participation of every student is paramount to the success of the seminar. You are expected to read all assigned materials, come to class prepared and on time, and stay for the duration of the session. Participation includes both actively listening and speaking. There will be no tolerance for violent, disrespectful, disruptive or unlawful behavior. Please see the University Code of Student Conduct available at http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu

Absences and Make-ups. Attendance and preparedness counts basically for 30% of your grade. If you must miss a class, you may make up points by writing a 5-page critical essay that demonstrates your understanding of the readings assigned that week. Make up essays are due by 5:00 p.m. the Friday following the session missed. If you know you will be missing a class in advance, you should submit your make up early.

Technology. Cell phones must be silenced and put away during class. The use of laptops for note-taking purposes in this class is a privilege, not a right. If your laptop becomes a distraction for you or others, you stand to lose that privilege.

Disabilities. If you need or think you might need special accommodations due to a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services at dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu, (732) 932-2848 and see me. I will try my best to abide by their recommendations.

Required readings: They will be available on the course’s Sakai site, through the library’s electronic resources and also includes the following books that students should buy or otherwise procure.

COURSE MATERIALS

Journal Articles
Students are expected to procure their own copies of articles from journals to which the Rutgers library subscribes.

Book Chapters
Selections from books and anthologies will be available on the course’s Sakai site, under the “resources” tab.

Books
Below is a list of books that you may want to purchase or borrow. They are listed in the order in which we will be reading them. I have also included titles that we will only read partially – they are marked with an asterisk – either because of the length of the assigned selections or the importance of the works merit you owning your own copy.

Zizek, Slavoj
Agamben, Giorgio  
Arendt, Hannah  
*Farmer, Paul  
Lubkemann, Stephen C.  
Feldman, Allen  
*Aretxaga, Begoña  
*Foucault, Michel  
Ghassem-Fachandi, Parvis  
Tilly, Charles and Sidney Tarrow  

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Most readings are available at: [https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal/site/anthroviolence_fall10](https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal/site/anthroviolence_fall10).  
Note that readings and page allocations might change.  

**WEEK 1 (1/23): INTRODUCTION**  
Arblaster, Anthony  

**WEEK 2 (1/30): WHY VIOLENCE?**  
Benjamin, Walter  
Robben, Antonius C. G. M., and Carolyn Nordstrom  
Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Philippe Bourgois  
Zizek, Slavoj  
PART I: THEORIES ON THE ONTOLOGY OF VIOLENCE

WEEK 3 (2/6): STATE OF VIOLENCE & SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY
Hobbes, Thomas
Arendt, Hannah
Foucault, Michel
Locke, John
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques
1972 The Social Contract. Book II, Ch. 5; Book II, Ch. 10-14.

WEEK 4 (3/13): THE DIALECTICS OF VIOLENCE
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich
Engels, Friedrich
Fanon, Frantz
Gramsci, Antonio
(See also: http://courses.justice.eku.edu/PLS330_Louis/docs/gramsci-prison-notebooks-vol1.pdf
Marx, Karl
TBA. Creative destruction

WEEK 5 (2/20): VIOLENCE. LAW & THE STATE
Agamben, Giorgio
Arendt, Hannah
Weber, Max
Clausewitz, Carl von.
  On War (Ch1 & 2, pp 75-99)

WEEK 6 (2/27): EVERYDAY VIOLENCE
Taussig, Michael
Bourdieu, Pierre, and Loic Wacquant
Bourdieu, Pierre
Farmer, Paul
  2004 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. (Selections)

PART II: ETHNOGRAPHIES OF VIOLENCE

WEEK 7 (3/6): (OVERT) STATE VIOLENCE
Green, Linda
Lubkemann, Stephen C.

WEEK 8 (3/13): CIVIL VIOLENCE
Feldman, Allen
Scott, James
  1987 Weapons of the Weak (Selections)
  2009 The Art of Not Being Governed (Civilization & the Unruly)

WEEK 9: (3/20): SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 (3/27): GENDERED VIOLENCE
Aretxaga, Begoña
Zarkov, Dubravka
Nordstrom, Caroline

WEEK 11 (4/3): VIOLENCE & THE BODY
Das, Veena
2006  Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Ch. 3)
Foucault, Michel
Scarry, Elaine
Taussig, Michael

WEEK 12 (4/10): DEATH, TRAUMA & THE ROUTINIZATION OF VIOLENCE
Ghassem-Fachandi, Parvis
Schepers-Hughes, Nancy

Part III: VIOLENCE IN ETHNOGRAPHIC PRACTICE

WEEK 13 (4/17): ARTICULATING FRAMEWORKS FOR THE STUDY OF VIOLENCE & CONFLICT
Tilly, Charles and Sidney Tarrow
Nordstrom, Carolyn and Adriana Quiñones Giraldo
2002 Four Ways to Tell a Story on Violence. Reviews in Anthropology 31(1)1-19.
Zizek’s Violence - revisit

*** Paper Due: Monday, April 21st at 12 noon***

WEEK 14 (4/20): WRITING ON VIOLENCE: PEER REVIEW & PAPER WORKSHOP
Peer Reviews are due in class. Please come prepared to discuss the papers from your peers.

WEEK 15 (4/27): METHODS, ETHICS, SAFETY, & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
Feldman, Allen


***Op-Ed Drafts are due for internal circulation on Monday, April 28th by 12 noon***

**WEEK 16 (5/1): PAPER & OP-ED WORKSHOP.**

Read your peers’ paper and op-ed drafts, and come prepare to offer feedback.

***Final Submissions Due: May 13th by 11:00 a.m.***