

The Social Dynamics of Terrorism, Security and Justice (Fall 2015) -- ONLINE
George Mason University: School for Conflict Analysis & Resolution

CONF 345-DL1/2 [Distance Learning sections 1 & 2]
August 25 – December 13, 2015

Instructor: Dr. Michael Loadenthal, (Michael.Loadenthal@gmail.com)

One cannot seek to end cycles of violence without understanding both the victim and the perpetrator. While traditional studies of terrorism focus on intelligence, policing, prevention, and post-attack response, a *critical* framework situated within the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution must seek to not only *describe* the situation, but to understand it as well. This course seeks to teach students not only a vocabulary required to interact with traditional, security-centric terrorism studies, but also a critical lens which values context often lost within the counterterrorism discourse. Throughout the course, students will be exposed to the orthodox Terrorism Studies canon, as well as alternative perspectives, and those of non-state actors themselves. Through the examination of social media, students will be able to judge for themselves the claims made by violent political movements, and to integrate this observational knowledge with secondary analysis provided by academic journals, government reports and think tank analysis.

In building a *social* understanding of terrorism, one must weigh a variety of factors including ideology, the construction on communities, positionality (e.g. class, race, gender, etc.) and histories of trauma, collective violence and disenfranchisement. The mainstream discourse surrounding the study of terrorism maintains a dedicated aim: to prevent attacks, capture and kill terrorists, and punish offenders. Throughout the halls of academia and homeland security the state and private industry cooperate to protect life and property, yet scholarship focused on *understanding* how political and social unrest boils over into violence is a lesser-studied set of questions. What common thread exists in the narratives of radicalization for Syrian jihadi rebels, Russian anarchist saboteurs and North American anti-abortion militants? What do the violent actions of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, Ft. Hood shooter Nidal Hassan, and Palestinian hijacker Lelia Khaled have in common? How do they vastly differ? What observable measures can differentiate those who choose the ballot from those who choose the bullet?

Course Goals & Learning Objectives:

- The creation of a democratic learning environment encouraging critical engagement, a responsibility to contribute, and mutual accountability based on the principal of respect for all.
- Students will feel empowered to explain a variety of violent non-state actors taking into account numerous social factors such as ideology, identity and perspective.
- Students will build a vocabulary for interpreting and analyzing current events related to ongoing political violence and social movements.
- Students will become familiar with the core issues surrounding the study of terrorism such as causation, historical patterns, strategies, tactics, communications methods, group dynamics and rhetoric.

Required Course Text (*Additional readings distributed on Black Board*)

Matusitz, Jonathan. 2013. *Terrorism and Communication: A Critical Introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Online Course Logistics:

Blackboard will be used to host content for this course. Access Blackboard by following these steps:

1. Go to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>.
2. Login using your NETID and password.
3. Click on the ‘Courses’ tab.
4. Click on the name of our course.

Secure Browsing: Please begin preparing for the course by reading Bruce Schneier’s “NSA surveillance: A guide to staying secure,” [<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/05/nsa-how-to-remain-secure-surveillance>] and “About Tor”

[<https://www.torproject.org/about/overview.html.en>]. As you will be viewing a great deal of materials produced by violent non-state actors (e.g. propaganda videos hosted on Youtube), many students are concerned about the impact visiting such websites can have on their digital footprint.

For this reason, beginning on day one, I encourage all students to download, install and use Tor to (more) anonymously browse the internet. Tor is a free, open source package that allows you to surf with greatly added security through the use of a Tor-equipped browser. The use of Tor (and other privacy measures) is optional but encouraged when accessing outside materials. For more information:

- <https://ssd.eff.org/> [Electronic Frontier Foundation]
- <https://www.epic.org/privacy/tools.html> [Electronic Privacy Information Center]
- <https://securityinabox.org/> [Security tools]
- <http://zinelibrary.info/files/anonsec-imposed.pdf> [Online security guide for activists]
- <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/eseaman/> [Online security guide for human rights defenders]
- http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/guide_gb_md-2.pdf [Handbook for bloggers and cyber-dissidents]
- <https://thetinhathat.com/tutorials/misc/security-tools-journalists.html>
- <https://guardianproject.info/apps/> [The Guardian Project’s “Secure Mobile Apps”]

How the course will work:

- Each week your course materials will be a mix of written articles, short films and discussion boards. You will read the articles, watch the films, and read/respond to the discussion board.
- As per university guidelines, you are expected to devote approximately 8-10 hours on a weekly basis to complete all assigned readings/videos and partake in weekly discussions, quizzes and assignments.
- Each week you will be **required** to complete a quick quiz as part of your classroom participation grade.
- Each week you are **required** to post to the discussion board.
- Each module will be open from Monday (12:00am) until Sunday (11:59pm). At 11:59pm each Sunday, the module will be closed and the assignments (e.g. discussion posts, quiz) for that week will be graded. This is also when journals would be due. For example, if you are completing a journal based on the material in week #2, it would be due by 06 September 2015 at 11:59pm. **After this point, no late work (discussion post, quiz, journal) will be accepted.**
- The work for each week will vary slightly, but throughout the 14 weeks of the course you are responsible for completing 6 journal entries, 12 discussion board posts, 12 quizzes, and two exams. **After the week's module is closed, it will become unavailable to modify.**
- Concerning grading, the course is built out of **100 points**. Therefore, for each point earned (or lost) a student builds their final grade towards 100%. This means that all assignments/discussion posts/quiz questions, no matter how small, are important for your overall grade. **It is entirely possible to get 100% in the course if all assignments are completed and all quiz/tests answered with care.**
- All contact in the course will be done via email and Blackboard; thus, you are required to check your Mason email account regularly and to clear it often so that messages are not rejected for being over quota.

I am available to answer questions throughout the year via email, phone or Skype. Feel free to email me (Michael.Loadenthal@gmail.com), call (202-674-7495), or set up a time to Skype.

Course Assignments & Descriptions:

12 Weekly quizzes – 24% (2 pt. each)	Midterm exam – 8%
14 Weekly Discussion posts: 28% (2 pts. each)	Final exam - 10%
6 Journals - 30% (5 pts. each)	Total points = 100

Weekly quizzes:

(24% of grade)

Each week (no quiz on weeks #1 and #8) you will complete an online quiz after reading the articles and watching the assigned videos. This quiz is designed to test your comprehension of the assigned materials and takes the place of an in-class daily participation grade.

Discussion posts:

(28% of grade)

For each week, write a response (150-250 words) to the weekly discussion post. Feel free to respond to a portion of the question or provide a more complete answer. **Make sure you read your classmates' responses first and integrate their views into your post. Also, make sure your post shows comprehension of the course material. You are welcome and encouraged to quote the texts, provided you use proper quoting.** The aim of the post should be to strike a balance between your personal reaction to the material and your response to your classmates' reactions. Remember to be constructive not confrontational in your responses. **Exemplary and above average entries, posted BEFORE Sunday morning, are eligible for extra credit** (earning more than 2 points on a post). Additional details regarding grading discussion posts can be found towards the end of the syllabus.

Journal:

[~3 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font]

(30% of grade)

For 6 of the 14 weeks, write a journal entry (900-1,000 words) based on the readings you completed for that week. The journal entry should interact with the themes in the reading and should be **reflective and analytical, not a summary**. This can be informal reflection, analysis and/or questions and commentary. You can propose and answer a question, critique the authors, explore tangential examples or any other form of obviously-relevant analysis. The journal does not have to conclude as a 'finished essay' but it should be **CAREFULLY** edited. Think of the journal as a critical editorial, make sure you place yourself in the content (e.g your opinions, your questions, your observations, your disagreements, your agreements, etc.) and do not simply recite the authors. It is your choice (and responsibility) which weeks you complete a journal. **You may only turn in one journal per week. The journal must be turned in before that week is over, for example, a journal dealing with the readings from week #3 may ONLY be turned in during week #3.** Additional details regarding grading journals can be found towards the end of the syllabus

Midterm exam:

(8% of grade)

You will have one week to complete an open book midterm exam made up of short answer, essay questions mixed with standard multiple choice and fill in the blank questions. Once you start the exam you will have 2 hours to complete it. **Midterm exam due October 18, 2015 11:59pm EST**

Final exam:

(10% of grade)

You will have one week to complete an open book final exam made up of short answer, essay questions mixed with standard multiple choice and fill in the blank questions. Once you start the exam you will have 2 hours to complete it. **The final exam will be made available December 7 12:00am, and is due Sunday, December 13 by 11:59pm.**

Schedule of classes:

The following is a week-by-week schedule of assigned readings, videos, discussion post questions and quizzes. The readings will be posted on Blackboard as .pdf files. The videos are hosted on other servers and therefore, the possibility exists, that between creating this document and the week of the assignment, the video may be unavailable. If you find a text or video to not be available, please contact me and I will locate an alternative link.

August 25-August 30

Week 1: Introduction to the course

- **Articles:**
 - Busé, Margaret. (2001) Non- State Actors and Their Significance, Non-State Actors Working Group of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.
 - Weinberg, L., et. al. (2004). The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 777 – 794.
 - Rapoport, D.C. (2002) The Four Waves of Rebel Terror and September 11th. *Anthropoetics*, Vol. 8, No. 1.
 - **OPTIONAL BACKGROUND READING:** Institute for Economics & Peace. *Global Terrorism Index 2014: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*. Annual. New York, NY: Institute for Economics & Peace, November 2014. <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Terrorism-Index-Report.pdf>.
- **Discussion post #1:** During week 1 you are required to complete a “getting to know you” sheet which is hosted under “week 1” discussion board.
- **NO QUIZ THIS WEEK**

August 31 – September 6

Week 2: Terrorism, political violence and violent conflict

- **BOOK:** chapter 1, “What is Terrorism?”
- **Articles:**
 - Schmid, A. P. (2004). Frameworks for Conceptualising Terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 197-221.
 - Ganor, B. (2004) Defining Terrorism: Is One Man’s Terrorist Another Man’s Freedom Fighter?
 - Sedgwick, M. (2007). Inspiration and the Origins of Global Waves of Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30:97–112
 - Pape, R. (2003). The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3., pp. 343-361.
- **Film:**
 - <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/12/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-al-ghuraba-the->

[chosen-few-of-different-lands-abu-muslim-from-canada/](#) [“The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abu Muslim from Canada”...this is a 2014 video produced by the Islamic State (formerly Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham or ISIS) to highlight the presence of Western, foreign fighters in Syria]

- **Discussion post #2:** How does the jihadi narrative frame itself, its enemy and the conflict at large? What is the conflict in Syria according to jihadis like the Islamic State? How is this narrative presented to a Western audience?
- **Quiz #2**

September 7 – September 13

Week 3: Terrorism as communication

- **BOOK:** chapter 2, “Terrorism as a Communication Process: Tactics”
- **Articles:**
 - o Crelinsten, R.D. (2002) Analysing Terrorism and Counter-terrorism: A Communication Model. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 77-122.
 - o Meleagrou-Hitchens, A., et. al. (2012) Lights, Camera, Jihad: Al-Shabaab’s Western Media Strategy. *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence*.
 - o Zelin, A. (2013) #Jihad’s social media trend. *The AFPak Channel*.
 - o Von Behr, I., et. al. (2013) Radicalisation in the digital era: The use of the internet in 15 cases of terrorism and extremism. *RAND Europe*.
- **Film:**
 - o https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIm_hf-fG3E&index=25&list=UUawNWlihdgaycQpO3zi-jYg [“IDF Transfers Medical Supplies and Food into Gaza”...this is a 2014 video produced by the Israeli army describing their humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip during Operation Protective Edge]
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j16xIxZdqgg&list=UUawNWlihdgaycQpO3zi-jYg> [“Targeting the Enemy: The IDF’s Anti-Terror Strategy in Gaza”...this is a 2014 video produced by the Israeli army describing their military efforts during Operation Protective Edge]
 - o http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=5ef_1253216111 [“Message to Americans from the Soldiers of Iraq...this is a 2005 video produced by The Mujahedeen Army, a Sunni insurgency group from Iraq. The video directly addresses Americans with the insurgent narrative.]
- **Discussion post #3:** Who are the audiences for terrorist propaganda? Who are the audiences for government propaganda? What is the difference in intent between propaganda produced by the state and that of the non-state?
- **Quiz #3**

September 14 – September 20

Week 4: Terrorism and media

- **BOOK:** chapter 3, “Terrorism as a Communication Process: The Media”

- **Articles:**
 - Ivory, J., et. al. (2007) Terrorism in Film Trailers: Demographics, Portrayals, Violence, and Changes in Content After September 11, 2001. *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*, August 2007.
 - Hill, Paul. (2003). *Defending the Defenseless*. (Republished from Current Controversies Series: *The Abortion Controversy*, Greenhaven Press, 2001.
 - Waagner, C. (2001). *Clayton Lee Waagner's Escape Clause: How Low Level Support Personnel Can Escape Death*.
- **Film:**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFUrib-Xy48> ["Soldiers in the Army of God"...this is a 2000 HBO documentary following the militant anti-abortion network known as the Army of God. Focus on the Army's use of communication strategy, their framing of the abortion debate and their justifications for the use of violence.]
- **Discussion post #4:** How do the different anti-abortion narratives communicate motivation? Have are these framings of violence, defensive violence and reactionary violence converge and differ? If terrorism is a process of communicating, are these actors succeeding?
- **Quiz #4**

September 21 - September 27

Week 5: Terrorism as spectacle

- **BOOK:** chapter 4, "Terrorism as a Communication Process: The Audience"
- **Articles:**
 - Newman, Edward. (2006) Exploring the "Root Causes" of Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 29, No. 8, pp. 749-772.
 - Baudrillard, Jean. (2001) "The Spirit of Terrorism", *Le Monde*.
 - Giroux, Henry. (2006) "Beyond the Spectacle of Terrorism" [excerpt of book by the same title.]
 - Chomsky, Noam. (1991) "International Terrorism: Image and Reality", *Western State Terrorism*, Ed. Alexander George, Routledge.
- **Film:**
 - <http://digitalcampus.swank.com/GMU/SDC/Watch.aspx?v=26bbbe75181a4320b642059742f08364> "Paradise Now"...is a 2005 fictional movie which takes places in the Palestinian West Bank and Israel. Watch 27:02-39:30. In these scenes, two Palestinian brothers film their martyrs' will before heading off to carryout a suicide bombing. For more information on the film including a complete plot synopsis visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradise_Now
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZW097MZqhao> ["Video Message from US Gov't Contractor Warren Weinstein, Kidnapped by Al-Qaeda in Pakistan/2011"...this is part of a series of videos released by al-Qaeda's official media production company, As-Sahab media. It is a hostage video for Warren Weinstein. For more information on Weinstein's case visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_Weinstein,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15996128>,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/8699426/American-aid-worker-Warren-Weinstein-kidnapped-in-Pakistan.html>

- **Discussion post #5:** How can terrorist propaganda be displayed as a play for the world to see? Cite examples when this is true and examples when it is not true.
- **Quiz #5**

September 28 – October 4

Week 6: Framing

- **BOOK:** chapter 5 & 6, “Framing Terrorism” & “Terrorism as Social Construction of Reality”
- **Articles:**
 - o Haider-Markel, Donald P, et. al. (2006) Can We Frame the Terrorist Threat? Issue Frames, the Perception of Threat, and Opinions on Counterterrorism Policies. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 545-559.
 - o Coaffee, Jon. (2006) From Counterterrorism to Resilience, *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 389-403.
 - o Abrahms, Max. (2011) Does terrorism really work? Evolution in the conventional wisdom since 9/11. *Defense and Peace Economics*, Vol. 22, No. 6, pp. 583-594.
- **Film:**
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-b10qEYtMA> [“Rare forage of the IRA – Part 1”...this is a portion of a propaganda video released by the Provisional Irish Republican Army in the 1980s. Try and follow the ‘story line’ that not only rhetorically argues *why* the PIRA exists, but also attempts to humanize them and portray them as an army ‘of the people.’ Pay special attention to the interview given by the commander at the 6:00 mark. For those having trouble with the accent, you can turn on Youtube’s embedded closed captioning. For background on the PIRA visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provisional_Irish_Republican_Army]
- **Discussion post #6:** How can the concept of “framing” be employed to understand terrorism? How can it be used to critically examine the study of terrorism?
- **Quiz #6**

October 5 – October 11

Week 7: Psychology, Insanity and Terrorist Stereotypes

- **BOOK:** chapter 7, “Stereotyping Terrorists”
- **Articles:**
 - o Baele, Stephanie J. (2014). Are terrorists “insane”? A critical analysis of mental health categories in lone terrorists’ trails. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 257-276.

- Taylor, Max and John Horgan. (2006). A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Processes in the Development of the Terrorist. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 18, No, 4, pp. 585-601.
- Ruby, Charles L. (2002) Are Terrorists Mentally Deranged? *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Special Issue.
- Lester, David and Bijou Yang. (2004) Suicide Bombers: Are Psychological Profiles Possible? *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 27, pp. 283-295.
- **Film:**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYSyoY4cRw4> [“Failed suicide bomber interview”...filmed around 2011 this news segment interviews a suicide bomber from the Taliban.]
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pek5xISalL8> [“Inside the mind of a failed Suicide Bomber” is a 2007 CNN news segment interviewing a suicide bomber from the Taliban.]
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OHQ5oMywMk> [“rEVILution: The Rise of Right-Wing Terrorism”...is a documentary produced around 2013 which features a compilation of news segments documenting the rise in right-wing domestic terrorism in the US. Pay attention to the frequent discussion of the perpetrators sanity and state of mind.]
- **Discussion post #7:** Can those choosing to pursue political violence and terrorism be considered “insane”? What is the connection between mental soundness and involvement in violence? In what ways do the ideologies (e.g. Islamist, leftist, patriot militia) of terrorist groups serve to enforce or defy the portrayal via stereotypes? What can be said about terrorist archetypes and their rigidity and/or flexibility?
- **Quiz #7**

October 12 – October 18

Week 8: The rhetoric of social movements and non-state actors

- **BOOK:** chapter 8, “Interpreting Terrorism through Rhetoric”
- **Articles:**
 - Rolling Thunder (Issue 5)...produced by anarchist collective CrimethInc.
 - Bite Back Magazine (Issue 7)...produced by supporters of the Animal Liberation Front.
 - And May He Take Martyrs From You...produced by Ansar al-Mujahideen
 - Dabiq #1...produced by The Islamic State (formerly known as ISIS)
- **Film:**
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpOW0XAppUY&list=UU_0s_EG M7SprOWwiO-mlyA [“Why We Fight”...this is a 2014 propaganda film produced by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. It explains the group’s conflict narrative.]
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxCSYJI8_xc [“Anonymous/AntiSec

- Merry LulzXmas 2011"...is a 2011 short piece of propaganda from the international hacker network Anonymous/AntiSec. It summarizes their year of activity and closes with a clip from Charlie Chaplain.]
- **Discussion post #8:** In comparing the FARC and Anonymous videos, what role does emotion play in transmitting propaganda? How do the two videos tap into different emotions? How are these feelings communicated through music, text and images? In what ways are the two videos similar in their styles? In what ways are they different?
- **Quiz #8**

October 19 – October 25

Week 9: Understanding violence

- **BOOK:** chapter 9, "Euphemisms for Terrorism"
- **Articles:**
 - o Zizek, Slavoj. *Violence*. New York: Picador, 2008. [Excerpt]
 - o Anonymous. (1999). *ACME Collective: N30 Black Bloc Communiqué*.
 - o Regan, Tom. "How to Justify Violence" Excerpt from edited volume, *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?*
- **Film:**
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQkPyi8Fq2Y> ["A History of the Black Bloc – Part 1"...is a 2014 segment from Submedia.tv, an anarchist propaganda media outlet that produces regular segments. This one explains and contextualizes the black bloc, a protest tactic that has steadily gained in popularity since the 1990s. Focus your attention on how the show's producers understand violence and its relation to the law.]
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ev8Bg4nT6w> ["For the Oakland Commune"...is a 2011 short propaganda film produced by Oakland-area anarchists during the Occupy Wall Street movement. It highlights a downtown march involving the destruction of corporate property and the occupation of a port deemed the target of a general work strike.]
- **Discussion post #9:** How can violence be understood through a variety of perspectives? Is it possible for a victim and perpetrator of violence to view a single event through a shared lens? What are the strategies commonly used to portray violence as necessary and defensive?
- **NO QUIZ THIS WEEK**
- **ASSIGNMENT DUE: Midterm exam due October 18, 2015 11:59pm.**

October 26 – November 1

Week 10: Gender and Terrorism

- **BOOK:** no assigned readings from the textbook this week
- **Articles:**
 - o Ness, Cynthia. (2005) In the Name of the Cause: Women's Work in Secular and Religious Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism.*, Vol. 28, No. 5, pp. 353-373.

- Hasso, Frances. (2005) Discursive and Political Deployments by/of the 2002 Palestinian Women Bombers/Martyrs. *Feminist Review*, No. 81, pp. 23-51.
- Cunningham, Karla. (2003) Cross-Regional Trends in Female Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 171-195.
- Blee, Kathleen. (2005). Women and Organized Racial Terrorism in the United States. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 28:421–433.
- **Film:**
 - [LINK TBD] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqqExZLkgtA> [“The Terrorist”...this is a 1999 Sri Lankan film created on a very small budget. The story follows a female Tamil Tiger on her mission. **Make sure you turn on the captions so that you can follow the story in English**]
- **Discussion post #10:** Based on the film, what are the ways in which Malli acts in a traditionally *feminine* manner? In what ways does she defy traditional femininity? How can gender be enforced and/or resisted within a violent social movement?
- **Quiz #10**

November 2 – November 8

Week 11: Groups dynamics and development

- **BOOK:** chapter 10, “Terrorism and Group Dynamics”
- **Articles:**
 - Joosse, Paul. (2007). Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion: The Case of the Earth Liberation Front. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 19, Pages 351-368.
 - Hirsch, Eric L. (1990) Sacrifice for the Cause: Group Processes, Recruitment, and Commitment in a Student Social Movement. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 243-254.
 - Libicki, Martin, et. al. (2007) Exploring Terrorist Targeting Preferences. *RAND Corporation*. [This is a rather long document so focus on Chapter 2, “What Drives al Qaeda’s Choice of Targets?”]
- **Film:**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfVAJ2aECOM> [“If A Tree Falls”...a 2011 documentary film about the Earth Liberation Front explored from the group dynamic and personal perspective. Feel free to watch the entire film, but make sure to watch 26:15-40:00. For a very detailed account of Daniel’s cell’s arsons and activity, read the government’s sentencing memorandum available at http://www.targetofopportunity.com/government_sentencing_memo.pdf. For background on Daniel and his case, visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_G._McGowan]
- **Discussion post #11:** What does the story of Daniel McGowan teach us about the social dynamics of individuals’ involvement with political protest and political violence? How can the ELF model allow for such individuals to remain involved yet not regulate their behavior? How does a movement like this dictate tactical

and strategic imperatives such as whom to target in attack?

- **Quiz #11**

November 9 – November 15

Week 12: How does modern terrorism operate?

- **BOOK:** chapter 11, “Organizational Structure and Leadership in Terrorism”
- **Articles:**
 - o Ehrlich, Paul R. and Jianguo Liu. (2002). Some Roots of Terrorism. *Population and Environment*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 183-192.
 - o Dolnik, A. & Bhattacharjee, A. (2002). Hamas: Suicide Bombings, Rockets, or WMD? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 14, No. 3 Pages 109 – 128.
 - o “Alleged militant sheds light on Hamas operations in Gaza Strip.” *Ma’an News Agency*. 2009 Feb. 20.
 - o Scales, Robert and Douglas Ollivant. (2014) Terrorist armies fight smarter and deadlier than ever. *The Washington Post*, 1 August 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/terrorist-armies-are-fighting-smarter-and-deadlier-than-ever/2014/08/01/3998ae00-18db-11e4-9e3b-7f2f110c6265_story.html
- **Film:**
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enRVsBDz1oo> [“Inside an al-Shabaab training camp” is a brief 2013 news documentary exploring training facilities of al-Qaeda’s Somali affiliate, al-Shabaab.]
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFZhQ4u2Cbg> [“Embedded with Al-Qaeda in Syria: ISIS and al-Nusra” is a brief 2014 news documentary exploring the Syrian civil war, focusing on the Sunni jihadi factions.]
- **Discussion post #12:** How are the methods (i.e. tactics and strategy) and motivations (i.e. root causes and ideologies) shaped by the organizational structures of terrorist groups? Are all terrorist groups structured in similar ways? How do networks like the Army of God or Earth Liberation Front differ from paramilitary non-state actors like al-Shabaab or Hamas?
- **Quiz #12**

November 16 – November 22

Week 13: Looking forward towards the future

- **BOOK:** chapter 13, “The Globalization of Terrorism”
- **Articles:**
 - o Hammes, T.X. (2007) Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges. *Military Review*, May-June 2007, pp. 14-23.
 - o Mohhadam, Assaf. (2013) How Al Qaeda Innovates. *Security Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 466-497.
 - o Silke, Andrew. (2001) The Devil You Know: Continuing problems with research on terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 1-14.

- **Film:**
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6nLrUg_bzs [“On the Frontline With the Gaza Rocket Men... a 2006 documentary exploring the cat and mouse tactical relationship between the Gaza Strip’s rocket launching militants and the Israeli air force pilots who hunt them. While Palestinian rocketry has advanced a great deal since this was filmed, it speaks to the evolving military structures of non-state actors, such as those fighting in the Gaza Strip.]
 - <http://jihadology.net/2014/06/29/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-sham-the-end-of-sykes-picot/> [“The End of Sykes-Picot”... is a 2014 propaganda film from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) documenting their break of the Iraq-Syria border. The protagonist is a foreign fighter from Chile and he explains ISIS’s goals and accomplishments as well as their plans for the future.]
- **Discussion post #13:** What does the future of terrorism look like? How can the changes we have witnessed since 9/11 signal what is to come in the proceeding decade?
- **Quiz #13**

November 23 – December 6

Week 14: Conclusions

- **BOOK:** no assigned readings from the textbook this week
- **Articles:**
 - Thompson, A. (2008). Representation’s Limit: The Epistemology of Spectacular Violence. In Ayyash, M., & Hendershot, C. (Eds.) *Violent Interventions: Selected Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the York Center for International and Security Studies* (pp. 5-20). Ontario: York Center for International and Security Studies.
 - Weber, M. (1918) “Politik als Beruf (Politics as a Vocation).” Lecture given to Free Students/Movement, Munich University.
 - Best, Steven and Anthony Nocella. (2004) Defining Terrorism. *Animal Liberation Philosophy and Policy Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-18.
- **Discussion post #14:** Based on all of our readings and videos, what is terrorism to you? Is all terrorism immoral and unethical? Can states commit acts of terrorism? Can terrorism achieve the goals of its proponents?
- **Quiz #14**

[Reading days December 8 – December 9]

CONF 345 final exam open Monday, December 07 and is due Sunday, December 13 before 11:59pm EST.

[Exam period December 10 – December 17]

Course & Assignment policies:

- This course will be dealing with contemporary and controversial topics, and as such, it is essential for students to help foster an academic atmosphere encouraging respectful dialogue. Students are encouraged to challenge one another (and me), but only if such challenges are offered in a manner that is considerate of a diversity of opinions. In an attempt to make the electronic classroom a “safe space” for dialogue, disrespectful, derogatory, purposefully or otherwise disruptive comments will not be tolerated.
- Course deadlines are firm. Assignments turned in after a module is closed will not be counted. If you have extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from completing an assignment on time, it is your responsibility to contact me BEFORE the due date with documentation and we may be able to arrange an extension. After the close of a module, all assignments that have not been delivered will receive a zero.
- Each week, the readings will take a variety of forms including academic (canon) articles, government reports, narrative accounts from political actors, propaganda and inter-movement publications, videos and so on. Students are expected to complete all of the assigned readings/videos assigned each week. Readings are included to provide complementary perspectives, necessary background, or further detail to difficult subjects. Evidence that the reading has been completed will come from online discussions, journal entries and written assignments.
- **All assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard.** Journals are to be written in a word processor and then uploaded to Blackboard as attachments, NOT written within the Blackboard system or written elsewhere and pasted in. In the rare event that submitting via Blackboard is not possible, assignments can be emailed to Michael.Loadenthal@gmail.com as an attachment. **When submitting assignments the file must be named in the following format, “Your Name – Assignment,” for example, “Michael Loadenthal – Journal 7.” Files received with names such as “Terrorism class thing,” “Turn this in today,” “My Paper,” “Terrorism Journal”, etc. will be penalized.**
- When writing assignments, a word count *excludes* the bibliography/sources, endnotes, footnotes, cover page, etc. and *includes* only the body of the paper (i.e. beginning of introduction to the end of the conclusion). **Word count ranges represent minimums and maximums, thus if a paper’s word count range is 1,200-1,500 and a submission is 1,1000 or 1,600 words, the assignment will need to be reworked prior to being graded.**
- All papers must follow a recognized and consistent citation style (e.g. APA, ASA, MLA, Chicago, Turabian) and be correct as per the specific style guide.

Grading Criteria for Discussion Posts

2/2: “Completed excellently”: The question was addressed showing comprehension and integration of the assigned readings and/or films as well as the responses from classmates. The poster reacted to the question, other students, and the assigned materials with **original thought**. An “excellent” post builds on the conversation without repeating, rehashing and summarizing.

1.5/2: “Completed satisfactory”: The question was addressed showing comprehension but one or more components was missing such as not responding to previous posters, not integrating the reading, etc. The post lacks original thought, and for example, is based around phrases such as “I agree with the previous posters who said...”

1/2: “Completed but needs improvement”: The response showed little/no integration of the reading or previous posters, did not respond to the question, or was otherwise less than helpful for progressing class discussion. The post was generic, not related specifically to the course material or the discussion board conversation

0: discussion post not completed

By answering early in the week you have less material to react to (i.e. less students have posted), and by waiting until the last minute, you are left to read and react to quite a bit of material. While the discussion posts cannot address all of the readings, all of the films, and all of the previous posters, they must show that the material was reviewed and has been integrated into your response.

Grading Criteria for Journals

In order to get a 5/5 on your journal you must keep a few important guidelines in mind. Your journal reflects on the assigned course materials, placing you the reader into the discourse. This means that the essay is NOT meant to be a summary. I know what the readings say. The point of the journal is to allow you a space to be reflective—what did you agree with? What did you disagree with? What made you angry? What made you excited? How do the themes relate to your life, your passions your scholarship? A journal should not go article-by-article pulling quotes and telling me what the author already said, I should be you interacting with the ideas of the course while showing me that you have read and understand the material. **Journals that discuss ideas, or include quotes from authors MUST include a works cited/references page and show proper use of quoting/in-text citation.**

Common ways people loose points (and can be easily avoided)

- 0.5 - -2.5 = Does not integrate assigned course material
- 0.5 - -2.5 = Under word count
- 0.5 - -2.5 = Incorrect citing, missing references
- 0.5 - -2.5 = Consistent misspellings, grammatical errors, etc.
- 0.5 = Wrong file name

Grading Standards for the Course (1 point = 1 percent)

- A Superior: Student shows excellent critical analysis in oral contributions and writing; all assignments turned in on time.
- B Very Good: Solid work evidenced by careful synthesis of reading, timely contributions to class discussion, and clear, logical writing; all or most assignments turned in on time.
- C Satisfactory: Work demonstrates some understanding of materials and an average performance in written assignments and class discussion; some assignments turned in on time.
- D Inconsistent: Meager performance in all assignments and class discussion; late in turning in written work.
- F Failing: Student makes minimal effort, shows little understanding of assignments, and turns in incomplete or unacceptable work.

A+ = 100-98

A = 97-94

A- = 93-90

B+ = 89-88

B = 87-84

B- = 83-80

C+ = 79-78

C = 77-74

C- = 73-70

D = 69-60

F = 59 and below

University Policies:

Plagiarism -- Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. Claiming that someone else's work is your own, and using that work to satisfy a course requirement is a form of plagiarism. Copying material verbatim or paraphrasing text from a source without acknowledging that source is also plagiarism. Purchasing written work from another party or hiring someone to prepare work for credit in this course is another form of plagiarism. The work you submit for credit in this course must be entirely your own. **All instances of suspected plagiarism will be reported without exception to the appropriate academic official for administrative action.** If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, the Writing Center is a great resource. Their staff is happy to consult with you on such issues, and they also have many online resources. The Writing Center is also a great resource for other aspects of writing, such as organizing ideas, improving your writing style/grammar, and revising a paper. For more information: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?cat=39>

Students with educational needs -- GMU is committed to providing educational opportunities to a broad range of students, including those with different educational needs. Once students have registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474, you must then provide a faculty contact sheet from that office explaining your learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office, and I will do my best to ensure proper arrangements for lecture notes, test taking and/or assignment deadlines. However, students **must** be registered with DRS to receive this support, and **I must be notified no later than the second week of the semester.** More information can be found at <http://ods.gmu.edu/students/>

Emergency Preparedness - In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), GMU will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, the university is committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the GMU Web site (<http://cert.gmu.edu/>) and the GMU information line at (703) 993-3375 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information. In the unlikely event of such a pandemic and school closure is warranted, we will continue this course largely through the use of Blackboard. It would be necessary to check you email regularly in such a case, in order to keep up with online class schedules and requirements.

Student Support Offices Available at GMU:

- **Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)** – SUB I, Room 3129, 703-993-2380, caps.gmu.edu and caps.gmu.edu/learning-services/. Free individual or group counseling services for Mason students. Also offers workshops through their Learning Services on a variety of academic skills, such as studying for finals, improving concentration, note taking, time management, and more
- **LGBTQ Resources** - SUB I, Room 2200, 703-993-2702, lgbtq.gmu.edu. Programs and services targeting the LGBTQ community
- **Military Services** – JC, Room 245, 703-993-1316 military.gmu.edu. Counseling, benefits, advising for veterans, active duty students, guardsmen, reservists, and dependents.
- **Office of Disability Services (ODS)** –SUB I, Room 2500, 703-993-2474, ods.gmu.edu. Assesses students to determines if and what accommodations are necessary for learning
- **Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education (ODIME)** – SUB I, Room 2400, 703-993-2700, odime.gmu.edu. Provides additional support for historically underrepresented students and will assist when a student feels they have been a target of prejudice or discrimination.

- **Office of International Programs and Services (OIPS)** – SUB I, Suite 4300, 703-993-2970, oips.gmu.edu. Assists with visas and cultural adjustment for international students, faculty, and staff
- **Office of the Ombudsman** – Mason Hall, D201, 703-993-8730, ombudsman.gmu.edu. Neutral, independent and confidential resource to facilitate fair and equitable resolutions to concerns or problems experienced at the university.
- **Student Health Services** –SUB I, Room 2300, 703-993-2831, shs.gmu.edu. Provides health care, counseling, health education and prevention services to Mason students
- **Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education and Services (WAVES)** – SUB I, Suite 3200, 703-993-9999, waves.gmu.edu. Provides educational materials and presentations on drugs, alcohol, and healthy relationships, as well as support to victims of sexual violence

“Let's have some precision in language here: terrorism means deadly violence—for a political and/or economical purpose—carried out against people and other living things, and is usually conducted by governments against their own citizens...or by corporate entities such as J. Paul Getty, Exxon, Mobil Oil, etc etc., against the land and all creatures that depend upon the land for life and livelihood. A bulldozer ripping up a hillside to strip mine for coal is committing terrorism; the damnation of a flowing river followed by the drowning of Cherokee graves, of forest and farmland, is an act of terrorism. Sabotage, on the other hand, means the use of force against inanimate property, such as machinery, which is being used to deprive human beings of their rightful work...sabotage—for whatever purpose—has never meant and has never implied the use of violence against living creatures.”

— **Edward Abbey**