

Advanced Themes in Human Rights
International Studies 345-01, Macalester College, 4 Credits, Spring 2011

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Can understanding the behaviors of the actors involved in human rights violations improve how we respond to them? This course explores motivations and experiences of perpetrators, victims, bystanders and rescuers to draw lessons for defining justice and rebuilding human relationships. First, we consider understandings of moral reasoning, justice, guilt, and societal reconstruction. Then we explore why people behave the way they do during periods of widespread political violence, and what it does to victims. Finally, we examine and assess examples of different responses to such violence in light of these understandings, seeking to connect human experience to justice.

Required Text:

James E. Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2nd Ed, 2007.

Other readings are on Moodle.

Grade components:

1. **Participation:** Worth 20% of the grade. This is not a lecture course; careful, well-prepared participation in discussion is very important. As you do the readings, make sure to write up one or two discussion questions for each period, which we will draw on from time to time.
2. **3 1-page response papers:** These informal, ungraded 1-page (single-spaced) papers can be on any three readings across the course of the semester that particularly interest you. They are intended to help you to clarify your thoughts and to articulate questions *before* the discussion. They are due the day we discuss the reading. They are low-stakes because they are ungraded, but do contribute toward the participation grade.
3. **2 short writing assignments:** There will be two 5-page papers through which you will engage with the material in Parts I and II of the course, respectively (Paper 1 due February 15th, and Paper 2 due March 19th; prompts will be given separately). Worth 15% each (total 30% of the grade).
4. **Final paper:** You will write a 15-to-20-page paper on a topic that engages with the course's central themes through a case study. Further instructions will be offered later in the semester, and a paper proposal is due March 1. Due May 3rd. Worth 30% of the grade.
5. **Presentation:** In the final weeks of the course, you will each share your final paper's research and analysis with the class. Worth 20% of the grade.

Grading scale:

100-94: A	89-87: B+	79-77: C+	69-61: D+
93-90: A-	86-83: B	76-73: C	60-59: D
	82-80: B-	72-70: C-	58-55: D-

- “A” work 1) is on time; 2) accomplishes the assigned tasks fully; 3) is clearly and engagingly written using proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation; 4) well-organized; 5) correctly cites all sources used; 6) is carefully and thoroughly researched, if research is required; 6) and shows a superior level of creativity, thoughtfulness and insight into the topic at hand.
- “B” work competently accomplishes requirements 1-5 listed above, and is generally well done, but shows lower levels of creativity, originality, and/or insight.
- “C” work offers a minimum level of competence on some or all of requirements 1-5, but contains serious flaws in argument, writing, research, and/or organization.
- “D” work does not competently realize most or all of requirements 1-5 and contains many serious flaws

Note: Plagiarized work will not be accepted and will incur significant penalties. If you are using someone else’s ideas, words, or research, you **MUST** cite them properly.

You may have 1 unexcused absence over the course of the semester; further absence will result in grade deduction.

Unless you have arranged an extension on a paper **before** the due date, each day late will incur a deduction of one letter grade.

Barring medical or family emergency, **incompletes** must be negotiated **before** the end of classes, and the paperwork filled out by the last day of class.

Final papers must be delivered in hard copy, not email.

SCHEDULE (subject to change as necessary)

PART I: FRAMEWORK: GUILT, JUSTICE AND SOCIETAL REORIENTATION

Tues, Jan 25: Welcome to the course, and brief video clips of survivor and perpetrator testimony

Question to consider for January 27th

1. Think of a time when you made a decision that to you clearly had a moral element to it, a choice between right and wrong; through what process did you make that decision? How much thinking did you do?
2. Through what process (if any) do you come to the conclusion that something you did was wrong?

Thurs, Jan 27: Peter Schotten, “Hannah Arendt’s Eichmann Reconsidered,” *Modern Age*, Spring 2007.

Tues, Feb 1: What is guilt? How might we distinguish between degrees and types? And how does it relate to criminal justice?

“Justice can be interpreted as ‘to each party his/her due’; the problem is determining what this means.” – Johan Galtung¹

Aryeh Neier, “Guilt,” in *War Crimes: Brutality, Genocide, Terror, and the Struggle for Justice*, Times Books, 1998.

Karl Jaspers, “Scheme of Distinction: Four Concepts of Guilt,” in *The Question of German Guilt*, New York: Fordham University Press, Second Edition, 2001.

Thurs, Feb 3: What is the difference between retributive and restorative justice? And how might restorative justice be pursued?

Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History and Genocide and Mass Violence*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1998 (excerpt).

Howard Zehr, “Restorative Principles,” in *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2002.

Tues, Feb 8: What models are available for societal restructuring in the aftermath of serious human rights abuses? How do they relate to justice?

Samuel P. Orliner, “Reconciliation,” in *Altruism, Intergroup Apology, Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, St. Paul: Paragon House, 2008.

Sadako Ogata, “Foreword: Imagining Coexistence in Conflict Communities,” and Introduction, in *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Antonia Chayes and Martha Minow, A Publication of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, Jossey-Bass, 2003.

PART II: ACTORS: PERPETRATORS, BYSTANDERS, RESCUERS AND VICTIMS

Key questions to consider with these readings, when concrete examples are offered:

- What is the nature of the harm/wrong/violation discussed?
- Who is responsible?
- Why did the perpetrators do it?
- What kinds of guilt do the people involved bear?
- According to the models we’ve discussed in Part I, what are possible responses?
- What *should* justice look like, and why?
- What factors should be taken into account in reorienting the relevant societal relationships? What needs to be addressed? By whom, and how?

¹ Johan Galtung, “After Violence, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, and Resolution,” in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, New York: Lexington Books, 2001, p. 3.

■ Perpetrators

Thurs, Feb 10: James Waller, *Becoming Evil*, Part I

Tues, Feb 15: Waller, *Becoming Evil*, Part II; **Paper 1 due**

Thurs, Feb 17: Waller, *Becoming Evil*, Part III

Tues, Feb 22:

“*The Good Old Days*”: *The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders*, ed. Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, Old Saybrook, CT: Konecky & Konecky, 1988, (excerpt).

Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005 (excerpt).

■ Bystanders

Thurs, Feb 24:

Steven K. Baum, “Bystanders,” in *The Psychology of Genocide* (brief excerpt) and

Stanley Cohen, “Bystander States,” in *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*

■ Rescuers and Altruism

Tues, Mar 1(Final Paper proposal due)

Baum, “Rescuers,” in *The Psychology of Genocide*, (brief excerpt).

Stanley Cohen, “Acknowledgement Now,” in *States of Denial*

Samuel P. Oliner and Pearl M. Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe*, New York: The Free Press, 1992 (brief excerpt).

■ Victims

Thurs, Mar 3: Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence—from domestic abuse to political terror*, New York: Basic Books, 1992 and 1997, (excerpt).

Tues, Mar 8: Herman continued, and

Yael Danieli, “Essential elements of healing after massive trauma: Complex needs voiced by victims/survivors,” in *Handbook of Restorative Justice*, ed. Dennis Sullivan and Larry Tiff, New York: Routledge, 2008.

Thurs, Mar 10: Group discussion of final papers projects, and Paper 2 due

March 15 and 17: SPRING BREAK!

PART III: RESPONSES IN PRACTICE

Key questions to consider:

- What is the nature of the violation being responded to?
- Who were the victims?
- Who is responsible? Why did they do it? What types of guilt are involved?
- Who is doing the responding, and who does the response target?
- What concerns (regarding justice and societal reorientation) does it address? Which are left unaddressed?
- How successful is the response? What are its strong points? Failures and shortcomings?
- To what extent do the responses adequately address factors related to perpetrator/bystander motivation and/or victim impact discussed in Part II?
- Can you think of ways that an understanding of human behavior/motivation/tendencies (of both perpetrators and victims) could strengthen the response, or avoid certain problems?

Tues, Mar 22: Confessions

Guest Speaker: Leigh A. Payne.

Leigh A. Payne, *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth Nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008 (excerpt).

Thurs, Mar 24: International criminal justice

Eric Stover, *The Witnesses: War Crimes and the Promise of Justice in the Hague*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005 (excerpt).

Tues, Mar 29: Local justice

Jennie E. Burnet, "Truth, Reconciliation, and Revenge in Rwanda's *Gacaca*," in *Transitional Justice: Global Mechanisms and Local Realities after Genocide and Mass Violence*, ed. Alexander Laban Hinton, Piscataway NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Thurs, Mar 31: Community and trust

Dean Ajdukovic and Dinka Corkalo, "Trust and betrayal in war" in *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, ed. Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Tues, April 5: Revising historical accounts

Timothy Longman and Théonèste Rutagengwa, “Memory, identity, and community in Rwanda” in *My Neighbor, My Enemy*.

Thurs, April 7: Coexistence projects

Diagas Chigas and Brian Ganson, “Grand Visions and Small Projects: Coexistence Efforts in Southeastern Europe,” in *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Antonia Chayes and Martha Minow, A Publication of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Tues, April 12: Education

Martha Minow, “Education for Coexistence,” in *Imagine Coexistence*.

Case studies: Each date will include background reading provided by presenters

Thurs, April 14: research presentations

Tues, April 19: research presentations

Thurs, April 21: research presentations

Tues, April 26: research presentations

Thurs, May 28: research presentations

Tues, May 3: course wrap-up, and final paper due.