PSC 372: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

Fall 2008 • Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 3:10 – 4:00pm • Baxter Hall #201

Professor: Ethan J. Hollander
Email: hollande@wabash.edu
Office: Baxter Hall #123
Office Hours: Monday 4-6 pm or by appointment (for a nominal fee)

In the world today, war is more likely to occur within states than between them. Civil wars, ethnic unrest, and the often brutal state responses to such occurrences dominate news headlines as well as the scholarly literature in Comparative Politics and International Relations. This class will examine what is perhaps the single most important issue in contemporary world politics in terms of its potential to impact world events and influence global politics — the resurgence of ethnic and intra-national conflict, state-sponsored violence and genocide.

This class will provide a general introduction to the study of nationalism and ethnic conflict. In it, we will touch upon a wide range of cases of ethnic conflict and genocide, including the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland, genocide in Rwanda and the Holocaust, and current crises in the Middle East. Of course, with such a wide range of cases, our approach will be largely theoretical — focusing on the underlying causes of such conflicts and the general conditions under which they might be remedied. Thus, a reliable foundation in the study of Comparative Politics (POLI 11 or its equivalent) and a reasonable familiarity with international current events will be very helpful.

For catching up on world events, I highly recommend the New York Times (available on-line), the Jim Lehrer New Hour (weekdays at 7pm on KPBS-TV), All Things Considered – NPR News (weekdays at 3:00–5:30 pm on KPBS Radio, 89.5 FM), and The Economist magazine.

Final grades will be calculated with reference to the following:

- Mid-term exam (taken in class, October 15) 25%
- Final exam (taken in class on Monday, December 8) 25%
- Take home assignment (due on Dec. 18th at 4:30pm) 25%
- Literature reviews, quizzes, and participation 25%

Please note that the final exam will be taken in class on the Monday of the last week of instruction. The last two days of class will be used to assign and discuss the take home assignment. You will then have the final week of instruction as well as the beginning of final’s week itself to complete the assignment.

While everyone is expected to attend class, participate and do the reading, each of you will have a particular requirement to lead section for two specific units during the semester. On the weeks when you are section leader, you will be required to turn in a literature review for all the starred (*) readings during that week. The review will summarize each of the featured readings and discuss how the readings relate to one another and to the theme for that unit. Length will vary, depending on your style and on the number and complexity of the readings for the unit; however, most comprehensive reviews will be 2-4 pages (single spaced). These reviews will make up a significant portion of your participation grade.

Most of the assigned reading for the class can be found on Moodle. There will also be a few films (on video reserve at the Lilly Library) and a few additional readings available online or as handouts. Unless otherwise noted, all readings should be completed by the dates specified in the schedule of classes.

Students with disabilities or special needs are encouraged to contact myself and Ms. Julia Rosenberg (Armory 101B; 361-6024; rosenbej@wabash.edu), director of Academic Support Services. Provided we are given enough notice, we will work together to make all reasonable accommodations. To this end, please take note of exam and assignment due dates listed on this syllabus and contact me with any concerns as soon as possible. You should also note that Academic Support Services provides peer
tutoring, writing and study skills assistance (contact 361-6258). All communication related to such matters will remain confidential.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change. You are responsible for all assignments given in class, regardless of whether they appear in the syllabus.

**Schedule of Classes**

**Week 0 (August 29, 2008): General Introduction.**
Subject covered: Sub-optimal outcomes of incrementally rational decisions, or: How seemingly sensible behavior can result in a crazy mess.

**Week 1 (September 1, 3 and 5): What is nationalism and where does it come from?**
Readings:
- Ernest Gellner: “Definitions” (from *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 1-7)
- Horace Miner: “Body Ritual among the Nacirema”
- Clifford Geertz: “The Fate of Nationalism” and “Primordial Sentiments”
- Pierre van den Berghe: “Race and Ethnicity: A Sociobiological Perspective”
- Michael Howard: “The Wars of the Nations” (from *War in European History*)
- Benedict Anderson: (readings from *Imagined Communities*, pp. 33-46)

Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________

**Week 2: The Dissolution of Yugoslavia.**

- “Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation”. A six-part documentary (1 hour each part). We will watch Part 2 in class. But the whole documentary (on video reserves) is optional and highly recommended.
  - Note: The series is comprised of 3 volumes; thus, part 2 is the second half of the first volume.

**Week 3: The Causes of Ethnic Conflict.**


Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________

**Week 4: Rwanda and the intervention that never happened.**

- “Ghosts of Rwanda” (An excellent documentary on the Rwandan genocide. Shown in class.)
- Alan J. Kuperman: “Rwanda in Retrospect” (*Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2000)
- Scott Straus: *The Order of Genocide* (pp. 17-33, 41).
- Luttwak: “Give War a Chance” (*Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1999)

Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________
Week 5: Justice or Reconciliation? What to do when the killing is over.

- Lyn S. Graybill: “Ten Years After, Rwanda Tries Reconciliation” (Current History, May 2004)
- Hartwell: “The Concept of Justice in the Early Post-Conflict Transitional Period”
- Hadden: “Punishment, Amnesty and Truth” (from Democracy and Ethnic Conflict)
- Axelrod: “Trench Warfare” from The Evolution of Cooperation.

Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________

Week 6: The Construction of Ethnic Identity.


Week 7: Overview and Mid-term.

- October 30: Review of issues from Weeks 1-6.
  - Jalali & Lipset: “Racial and Ethnic Conflicts” (Political Science Quarterly, 1992-93)
  - Michael Brown: “The Causes of Internal Conflict” (from Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict)

- Wednesday, October 15th: MID-TERM EXAM (in class)

Weeks 8 & 9: The Holocaust and micro-level causes of political violence.
Why do individuals commit violence on behalf of the state?

- “Obedience” (A Documentary about the Milgram study, to be watched in class.)
- The Browning-Goldhagen debate (Readings from Ordinary Men and Hitler’s Willing Executioners)
- NO-5810: “Letter from Turner to Hildebrandt” (Nuremberg trial document)

Week 10: The Arab-Israeli conflict.
The rationality and rationale of terror.

- Craig, et al.: On the Middle East since 1945 (Heritage of World Civilizations, pp. 1003-1010)
- Barry Rubin. “Israel’s New Strategy” (Foreign Affairs, July/August 2006)
  - Sarah Parkinson. “The Softer Side of Terror”
  - Levitt: Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism (selections, including “Forward” by Dennis Ross).
  - Michael Herzog: “Can Hamas be Tamed?” (Foreign Affairs, March/April 2006)
  - “Israel and Iran: How MAD can they be?” (Economist, February 8, 2007)
  - Martha Crenshaw: “The Logic of Terrorism” (from Terrorism and Counterterrorism) (Optional)

Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________
Week 11: The US, Afghanistan and Iraq: A clash of civilizations?

- Michael Scott Doran: “Somebody Else’s Civil War” (*Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2002)
- James Fearon: “Iraq’s Civil War” (*Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2007) *(Optional)*
- Vali Nasr: “When the Shiites Rise” (*Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2006)

Section leaders: ______________________  and  ______________________

Week 12: Northern Ireland, a ‘cured’ conflict.

- Richard Rose: “Northern Ireland: The Irreducible Conflict”
- Deaglán de Bréadun: “Northern Ireland: An End to the Troubles?”

Week 13: Constitutional design in deeply-divided societies.

Power-sharing and power-dividing as institutional solutions to ethnic violence

- Roeder & Rothchild: *Sustainable Peace* (pp. 36-67).
- Horowitz: “Ethnic Conflict Management for Policymakers”
- Lijphart: *Democracy in Plural Societies* (pp. 1-52, optional).

Week 14: Final exam and final assignment.

December 8: FINAL EXAM (in class)
December 10 & 12: Hand out, explain and discuss final paper assignment
Class Bibliography


Browning, Christopher R. “One Day in Jósefów: Initiation to Mass Murder”. In The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution. Cambridge University Press.


Horowitz, Donald L. “Ethnic Conflict Management for Peacemakers”. In Montville: pp. 115-130.


Kumar, Radha. The Troubled History of Partition”. In Foreign Affairs. 76:1 (January/February 1997): pp. 22-34.


------. “The Power-Sharing Approach”. In Montville: 491-510.

Luttwak, Edward N. “Give War a Chance”. Foreign Affairs. 78 (July/August 1999): pp. 36-44.


