SOCI-E114

**FAKE NEWS AND EXTREMISM:**

**PROPAGANDA AND FANATICS IN HISTORY AND IN THE PRESENT**

# Spring 2022

Live Zoom Lecture Time: Wednesdays, 2-4 pm

Live Zoom Section Time: Rotating

Week A: Thursday, 6:30 - 7:30 pm (01.27, 02.17, 03.10, 03.31, 04.21, 05.12)

Week B: Fridays, 10:00 - 11:00 am (02.04, 02.25, 04.08, 04.29)

Week C: Mondays 1:00 - 2:00 pm (02.07, 02.28, 03.21, 04.11, 05.02)

**Professors:**

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Office Hours:

Mondays, 6:30 - 7:30pm or by appointment.

Course Abstract

Why do millions of people come to believe obvious lies? What motivates extremist violence? How can we convince a fanatic not to be fanatical? This course offers a social scientific overview of extremism and propaganda in human history and society. Using historical case studies and social scientific analyses, students will become aware of major patterns of how fanatical groups and movements emerge, how extremists come to power, to which ends extremists strive, what the role of propaganda in belief-formation and action is, and how violent means are justified. The course examines the extreme fringes of politics - from medieval crusades and inquisition to contemporary terrorism and persecution. It takes us from the horrors of early modern religious wars to ideological and ethnic violence, the Holocaust and post-Cold War mass atrocities. Political violence in the name of race, religion, empire, class, or ethnicity and weaponization of these concepts is examined in historical and comparative perspective. Techniques of its legitimization are given particular attention, including discrimination, stereotyping, scapegoating, dehumanization and the dissemination of fake news. As they reflect on the roots and causes of extremist politics, students are also asked to reexamine the assets and liabilities of contemporary media and democratic deficit in our world. The course concludes with historical lessons and policy recommendations aimed at breaking the cycle of extremism.

*Course Requirements*

Live Zoom Lecture Attendance (Mandatory) **(15%)**

Live Zoom Section (Mandatory) **(20%)**

Responses & Discussion Board **(20%)**

Midterm Paper **(20%)**

Final Paper **(25%)**

Lectures & Reading: Students are required to attend synchronous zoom **lectures** once a week. Reading certain weeks will have **recommended readings** assigned. Students are encouraged – but not required – to go over these.

Responses & Discussion Board**:** Students will be required to complete **four** short responses (1-2 paragraphs) **over the first 8 weeks of the semester** that address something in the readings they found surprising, inconsistent, revelatory, or controversial. Responses are expected to be analytical, logical, and rooted in the readings. Students are also encouraged (but not required) to respectfully and productively comment on the responses of their colleagues. Participation in the discussion board will be considered as a bonus to the Response and Section Participation portion of a student's grade.

Discussion Sections: Discussion sections will be held once a week on a rotating schedule to best capture student availability. Students are expected to attend a minimum of **eight** sections over the course of the semester and contribute to the sections which they attend. Your contribution does not depend only on the frequency of your comments, but rather their quality - the ability to draw on course materials and your own experience productively, the ability to advance or sharpen in-class discussion and debate, the willingness to take risky or unpopular points of view, the use of logic, precision, and evidence in making argument. Comments that move the group discussion forward or that offer fresh insights or thoughtfully unique approaches to the material are the most valuable.

Midterm & Final Paper: The course will conclude with a Final Paper (10-12 pages) on a case study of extremism that the students select. Students will offer an explanatory argument addressing a clear, narrow research question, applying readings from at least three separate weeks (e.g. Week 4, Week 7 and Week 10). In preparation for the final paper, students will be required to submit a Midterm Paper (2-4 pages) which will serve as an outline and draft of their final assignment. Midterm papers should offer a potential research question as well as a prospective thesis and include material from at least two separate weeks. Midterm papers should also provide a rough, skeletal outline of the final paper.

**N.B. For graduate-level credit, students will produce a longer final project. Topic and scope should be approved mid-semester, and in consultation with the course heads.**

*Late Policy for Deadlines*

One partial grade will be deducted from papers and weekly responses that are turned in late (for example, an A- paper would be given a B+). Another partial grade will be taken off for each additional 24 hours of tardiness. Extensions will be given in the case of medical emergencies or religious observance.  **All requests for extensions should go directly to the course head and must be made in advance of the relevant deadline.**

*Accommodation Requests*

Harvard Extension School is committed to providing an inclusive, accessible academic community for students with disabilities and chronic health conditions. The Accessibility Services Office (ASO) (<https://extension.harvard.edu/for-students/support-and-services/accessibility-services/>) offers accommodations and support to students with documented disabilities. If you have a need for accommodations or adjustments, contact Accessibility Services directly via email at accessibility@extension.harvard.edu or by phone at 617-998-9640.

*Academic Integrity*

You are responsible for understanding Harvard Extension School policies on academic integrity (<https://extension.harvard.edu/for-students/student-policies-conduct/academic-integrity/>) and how to use sources responsibly. Stated most broadly, academic integrity means that all course work submitted, whether a draft or a final version of a paper, project, take-home exam, online exam, computer program, oral presentation, or lab report, must be your own words and ideas, or the sources must be clearly acknowledged. The potential outcomes for violations of academic integrity are serious and ordinarily include all of the following: required withdrawal (RQ), which means a failing grade in the course (with no refund), the suspension of registration privileges, and a notation on your transcript.

Using sources responsibly (<https://extension.harvard.edu/for-students/support-and-services/using-sources-effectively-and-responsibly/>) is an essential part of your Harvard education. We provide additional information about our expectations regarding academic integrity on our website. We invite you to review that information and to check your understanding of academic citation rules by completing two free online 15-minute tutorials that are also available on our site. (The tutorials are anonymous open-learning tools.)

*Equity and Inclusion*

We commit to make lectures and sections a precious venue where to learn, encounter different perspectives, and explore our emotional and intellectual response to the readings. We will create a community of dialogue where we exchange ideas and where everyone, further than participating, will train in taking care of others’ presence and participation. Therefore, paying attention to the fact that everyone has a chance to express their thoughts and -if not- considering in which ways -if any- we hinder them to do that, will be a relevant exercise. Learning and dialoguing could require a high level of exposure: we will collaborate in guaranteeing our class to be a safe place where disagreements and doubts are opportunities to learn. We won’t tolerate any shame/discriminatory/judging behaviors.

Acknowledging that learning is a process that each of us navigate with a different pace, method, and style, we will listen to your concerns and proposals for particular accommodations. All discussions on accommodations will remain confidential.

*Recommended Readings (Not Required)*

Danilo Mandic, *Gangsters and Other Statesmen: Mafias, Separatists and Torn States in a Globalized World* (Princeton University Press, 2021).

Vladimir Petrovic, *The Emergence of Historical Forensic Expertise: Clio Takes the Stand* (Routledge, 2017)

Course Outline

 **Week 1 (January 26)**

**Introduction to the Course**

‘What is Extremism?” in Berger, J. M. *Extremism*. MIT Press Essential Knowledge Series. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2018, pp.23-50.

Sinisa Malesevic, “The Contemporary Sociology of Organized Violence” in *The Sociology of War and Violence,* pp. 50-85.

Philip Knightley, “Looking Through a Glass Onion: Propaganda, Psychological Warfare

 and Persuasion” in *Munitions of the Mind*, pp.1-19.

 **Week 2 (February 2):**

**Major Themes**

Andrea Mork, “Why should society dispute historical concepts of truth and fake?”

in *Fake for Real: A history of forgery and falsification.* House of European History, Brussels 2020, 11-19.

Antonio, Coco, Instigation in J. De Hemptinne, R. Roth, E. Van Sliedregt (eds), 'Modes of Liability in International Criminal Law', Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2019, pp. 257-283.

Stanley, Jason. *How Propaganda Works*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015,

pp. 39-80.

Recommended:

*The Fake For Real Exhibition - A Birdseye View*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XaZYmLVvQ8&list=PLfFmlaaSoqz6F5Bg909_Z99x95oTmxzp0>

Richard Hofstadter. *The*Paranoid Style*in American Politics*

<https://users.clas.ufl.edu/burt/spaceshotsairheads/HofstaderparanoidstyleHarpers.pdf>

**Week 3 (February 9):**

 **Weaponizing Religion**

Douglas Pratt, “Texts of Terror: scriptural motifs for extremism” in *Religion and*

*Extremism : Rejecting Diversity*. London, UK ; Bloomsbury, 2018, 49-64.

Hans Küng, Religion, Violence and ‘Holy Wars’, *International Review of the Red Cross*,

Volume 87 Number 858 June 2005, 253-268.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. (1973). The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-

Century France*, Past & Present*, 59(1), 51–91.

Recommended:

Stern, Jessica. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*. New York:

Ecco, 2004, 3-137.

Public Intelligence, Anders Behring Breivik’s Complete Manifesto “2083 – A European Declaration of Independence” <https://publicintelligence.net/anders-behring-breiviks-complete-manifesto-2083-a-european-declaration-of-independence/>

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**Week 4 (February 16):**

**Propaganda, Militarism and the Thrill of War**

Kurt Tucholsky, “The Spirit of 1914” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, pp.18-21.

Michael Mann, “Explaining the Rise of Interwar Authoritarianism and Fascism” in *Fascists*, pp. 31-92.

Philip M. Taylor, “The First World War” and “The Bolshevik Revolution and the War of Ideologies, (1917-39)” in *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Day*, pp. 176-208.

F.T. Marinetti, “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” in *Marinetti: Selected Writings*, pp. 39-75.

Recommended:

Leni Reifenstahl, Triumph of the Will (1935), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_6uVrO5d6KU&t=19s

**Week 5 (February 23):**

**Weaponizing Class**

Gueniffey P. A History of Violence in the French Revolution. Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History, 2018, vol. 63, issue 3, pp. 908–916

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 2017, pp.

 41-62, 121-149.

J. Ryan, “The Sacralization of Violence: Bolshevik Justifications for Violence and Terror

during the Civil War”, *Slavic Review*, 2015/4, 808–831.

Anne Applebaum, *Gulag. A History*, London: Penguin Books, 2004, 1-25.

Recommended:

Maximilien Robespierre:Justification of the Use of Terror <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/robespierre-terror.asp>

Khrushchev's Secret Speech, 'On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences,' Delivered at the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union February 25, 1956 <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115995.pdf?v=3c22b71b65bcbbe9fdfadead9419c995>

Navalny Poison Squad Implicated in Murders of Three Russian Activists

<https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2021/01/27/navalny-poison-squad-implicated-in-murders-of-three-russian-activists/>

 **Week 6 (March 2):**

**Discipline, Distance and Dehumanization**

Max Weber, “The Origins of Discipline in War” in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, pp. 255-261.

Ernst Junger, “From Bazancourt to Hattonchatel” in *Storm of Steel*, pp. 16-22.

Randall Collins, “Does nationalist sentiment increase fighting efficacy? A skeptical view from the sociology of violence” in *Nationalism and War*, pp. 31-43.

Barbara Ehrenreich, “The Warrior Elite” and “The Further Evolution of War in the Twentieth Century” in *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War*, pp. 144-158; pp. 225-244.

Recommended:

German WWI veteran describes killing a French soldier in a bayonet charge <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XruYsAmKLyU>

 **Week 7 (March 9):**

**Weaponizing Ethnicity**

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of*

*Nationalism*, New York, Verso, 2006, 1-8, 144-162

Mann, Michael. The Dark Side of Democracy : Explaining Ethnic Cleansing. New York:

Cambridge University Press, 2005. 1-33

Erika Lee, *America for Americans. A History of Xenophobia in the United States*, New York, Basic Books, 2019, 1-16, 321-338

Recommended:

Heather Winlow, Mapping Moral Geographies: W. Z. Ripley's Races of Europe

and the United States, Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 96:1 (2006):, 119-141

Vladimir Petrović, Ethnopolitical Temptations Reach Southeastern Europe: Wartime

Policy Papers of Vasa Čubrilović and Sabin Manuilă, In Vladimir Tismaneanu, Christian Iacob Bogdan (eds.), Ideological Storms: Intellectuals, Dictators, and the Totalitarian Temptation. CEU Press: Budapest, 2019, 319-343

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**N.B. March 16 is Spring Break, no class!**

**Midterm Paper Due March 19**

**Week 8 (March 23):**

**Weaponizing Race**

Ivan Hannaford, Race. *The History of an idea in the West*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins

University Press, 1996, 325-368, 385-401.

Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews 1933-1945*, NY : Harper, 2009, 259-292..

Naimark, Norman M. *Genocide: A World History*. New York: Oxford University

Press, 2016, 123-144.

Recommended:

Protocols of the Elders of Zion: Critical Edition <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-ldquo-protocols-of-the-elders-of-zion-rdquo>

Christian Gerlach, “The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of German Jews, and Hitler’s

Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews”, *Journal of Modern*

*History*, vol. 12, no. 4 (1998), pp.759-812

Wansee Protocol <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/wannsee.asp>

Die Wanseekonferenz (1984) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URSNN5mnI2g

From a Speech by Himmler Before Senior SS Officers in

Poznan, October 4, 1943 <https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%204029.pdf>

Shawn E. Fields, Weaponized Racial Fear, 93 Tul. L. Rev. 931 (2019). Available at: <https://scholarship.law.campbell.edu/fac_sw/157>

War on drugs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSozqaVcOU8>

**Week 9 (March 30):**

**The Rationality and Morality of Mass Killing**

Jeff McMahan, “The Morality of Participation in an Unjust War” in *Killing in War*, pp.1 37.

James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War” in *International Organisation* 49, pp. 379-414.

Sigmund Freud, “Thoughts for the Time on War and Peace” in *Standard Edition of Complete Psychological Works: Volume XIV*, pp. 275-300.

Richard A. Gabriel, “War and Madness” in *No More Heroes: Madness and Psychiatry in War*, pp. 45-69.

Recommended:

Fog of War - Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S McNamara, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHdMeHxDg90&list=PLN-MLv-79blY6K6eeQc45LtFudyDzhN7\_

**Week 10 (April 6):**

**The “-isms”:**

**Racist, Colonial and anti-Colonial Fanatics**

Karl Marx, “On Imperialism in India” in *The Marx-Engels Reader (2nd Edition)*, pp. 653 665.

V.G. Kiernan, “Indian Wars” in *European Empires from Conquest to Collapse*, pp.37-57.

John Darwin, “Empire and Ethnicity” in *Nationalism and War*, pp.147-171.

Frederickson, *Racism: A Short Introduction*, “Climax and Retreat,”pp.99-138.

Philip Knightley, “Algeria is French 1954-1962” in *The First Casualty: The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*, pp. 391-408.

**Week 11 (April 13):**

**Weaponizing Images**

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the pain of others*, London : Penguin, 2003, 17-32, 66-90.

Cornelia Brink, ‘Secular Icons: Looking at Photographs from Nazi Concentration

 Camps,’ History and Memory 12(1) (2000): 135–150.

Vladimir Petrović. Power(lessness) of Atrocity Images: Bijeljina Photos between

Perpetration and Prosecution of War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia, International *Journal for Transitional Justice* 2015/2, 367-385.

Recommended:

Barbie Zelizer, “From the Image of Record to the Image of Memory: Holocaust

 Photography, Then and Now.” in Bonnie Brennen and Hanno Hardt, eds.,

Picturing the Past: Media, History, and Photography, 1999 (pp. 98-121). University of Illinois Press

David King, *Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's.*

*Russia*, Tate Publishing, 2014, 10-17, 79-93, 126-130, 220-4. <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2017/08/commissar-vanishes/>

Susie Linfield, The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence (Chicago, IL:

 University of Chicago Press, 2010). 52-81.

Photojournalist Ron Haviv interview (2001) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ykm_MklxX8Y>

**Week 12 (April 20):**

**The Extremism of Displacement:**

 **Refugees as Fanatics and as Victims of Fanaticism**

Gatrell, P. 2008. “Refugees and Forced Migrants during the First World War,”

*Immigrants & Minorities*, 82-110.

Bade, K.J. “The Second World War and the Post-War Decade” in *Migration in European*

*History*, pp.204-216.

Zolberg, A.R. Suhrke, A. and Aguayo, S. “Ethnic Conflict in the New States of Sub-

Saharan Africa” in *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the*

*Developing World*,pp.37-72.

**Week 13 (April 27):**

**Tamed Extremism:**

**Dreams of 1968**

Charles Tilly, “Twentieth-Century Expansion and Transformation” in *Social Movements, 1768-2008 (2nd Edition)*, pp. 65-94.

George Katsiaficas, “A Global Analysis of 1968” in *The Global Imagination of 1968: Revolution and Counterrevolution,* pp.47-58.

C.W. Mills, “The Decline of the Left” in *Power, Politics and People*, pp. 212-236.

Jeremy Brecher, “The Current Scene” in *Strike!*, pp. 284-291.

Todd Gitlin, “The Media in the Unmaking of the New Left” in *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts (2nd Edition)*, pp. 333-344.

Recommended:

Tariq Ali, “40 Years Later: 1968 and Today,” interview available at:

<https://portside.org/2018-05-24/tariq-ali-1968-and-today>

**Week 14 (May 4):**

**Breaking the Cycle of Extremism**

Volha Damarad “How big is the disinformation challenge facing us? in *Fake for Real: A history of forgery and falsification.* House of European History, Brussels 2020, 188-198.

Douglas Pratt, “Accommodating Diversity: Paradigms and Patterns*,”. Religion and*

*Extremism: Rejecting Diversity*. London, UK ; New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018, 13-30.

Ingram, H. J. “A Brief History of Propaganda during Conflict: Lessons for

Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communications.” International Centre for Counter-

Terrorism—The Hague 7, no. 6 (2016), 25-34.

Nguyen, C. Thi (2020). Echo chambers and epistemic bubbles. *Episteme* 17 (2):141-161.

“The Future of Extremism” in Berger, J. M. Extremism. MIT Press Essential Knowledge

Series. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2018, 145-168.

**Week 15 (May 11):**

**Review**

Review Session

**Final Paper due date: TB**