

Kill Assessment: An Investigation into Death, Genocide and other forms of Violence

Anthro (L48 3691)
Lab Sci 300 (TuTh 2:30– 4:00)

Professor: Derek Pardue, PhD / dpardue@artsci.wustl.edu

Office Info: McMillan 338 (phone: 935-9282); Wed 1-3 and by appointment

TA info:

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Course Description

Is violence best understood as a set of “random acts” marginal to society? Or, do societies need violence to make culture systematic and hierarchy functional? To discuss this polemic we will focus less on the psychology of individual pathology and more on violence as a potential category of culture.

We will address two major issues throughout this course. First, we will discuss different types of violence: physical / material violence and symbolic violence. Second, we will become familiar with ways that social groups turn violence into an aesthetic object and an artistic project. To accomplish our task we will take both an ethnographic and theoretical approach, so that we may better ground our understanding of violence in various people’s everyday experiences as well as develop a broader, more complete idea of what “violence” entails. Specific readings include the following topics: state violence and genocide in Guatemala, structural violence in Haiti, “absurd” fiction from Portugal, global disasters and political economics, child soldiers in Sierra Leone, violence and memory in Indonesia, hip hop aesthetics in Brazil, religious rituals of memory and protest in Colombia, US hate crimes, rape and other forms of domestic violence.

Grade Breakdown

Quizzes	40% (9 quizzes, each worth 5%, drop the lowest)		
First Test	25%		
Second Test	35%		
A+	doesn’t exist	C+	78-79
A	93 – 100	C	73-77
A-	90-92	C-	70-72 (*70 is cutoff point for Pass/Fail*)
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62

I round up scores, e.g. 92.5 is a 93 and thus an A

** Students can follow their grades on Telesis (<https://telesis.wustl.edu/Login.aspx>)**

** There will be two sources for grading: weekly quizzes and major tests. If a student misses a quiz, s/he must make it up within a week of the quiz date in TA office hours. It is up to the student to communicate with the TAs to schedule a makeup. Students are not permitted to make up more than 3 quizzes (barring extenuating circumstances). Make up tests will be administered only in situations agreed upon by the professor prior to the test date. In any case, documentation is required.

Attendance Policy: Attendance will not be taken *per se*. However, there are quizzes every week and it will be virtually impossible to do well on these without attending class. You can do the math. If you don't, of course, we will.

A word on advising: Even though this is a large class, students are always encouraged to visit my office hours or set up appointments with me and/or the TAs. Since the material is complex and may require further explanations, all students have the right to appointments and emails to discuss class issues personally.

Special accommodations for students with disabilities:

Students seeking disability-related accommodations and guidance from the University must use this official resource and are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Cornerstone on enrollment or once diagnosed. In contrast to high school students, college and graduate students are expected to self-identify themselves and to make specific requests for accommodations by notifying the Disability Resource Cornerstone. Eligibility for accommodations is determined on an individual basis, must be supported by professional documentation, and must be renewed each semester. The DRC will guide you through each step of this process, whether you are a prospective or current student, undergraduate or graduate. Instructors will maintain strict confidentiality regarding disability issues and related accommodations and will refer students directly to <http://disability.wustl.edu/>

Required Textbooks:

Sanford, Victoria. 2003. *Buried Secrets*. St. Martin's Press.
Beah, Ishmael. 2007. *Long Way Gone*, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
Ferrato, Donna. 2005 *Living with the Enemy*. Aperture Foundation.
Saramago, José. 2009. *Death with Interruptions*, Mariner Books.
Pardue, Derek 2008. *Ruminations on Violence*, Waveland Press.
Farmer, Paul. 2005 *Pathologies of Power*. University of California Press.

Course Schedule

August

31. Introduction to the Course.

September

2. Pardue, Intro and Chaps 1 and 2

7. Sanford, Prologue, Intro and chaps. 1-3
9. Sanford; chaps. 4-5 **QUIZ #1**
14. Sanford chaps 6-8; NYTimes “Distant Wars, Constant Ghosts”
16. Finish Sanford; Foreign Policy “Never Again?” **QUIZ #2**
21. Pardue, chaps. 3 and 5; Farmer, Intro and chaps. 1-2
23. Farmer, Chapters 3-4; **QUIZ #3**
28. Farmer, chaps. 5-7
30. Finish Farmer, chaps. 8-9 and afterword; **QUIZ #4**

October

5. Pardue, chap. 6; start Beah
7. Beah; **QUIZ #5**
12. Finish Beah; Review
14. **First Test in class**
19. Pardue,, chaps 9-11; start Ferrato
21. Finish Ferrato; NYTimes “New York’s Choking Loophole” **QUIZ #6**
26. “Safe Connections” in class
28. Pardue, chaps. 8, 16, 18; New Yorker “Hackjob” **QUIZ #7**

November

2. Open Fire (ARES)
4. Foucault (ARES); **QUIZ #8**
9. Film
11. Pardue, chaps. 7, 15, 17; **QUIZ #9**
16. Guillermprieto; Gibler (ARES)
18. Mignoli (ARES)
23. Garcia-Marquez (ARES)
25. **THANKSGIVING BREAK**
30. Saramago

December

2. Saramago
7. Finish Saramago
9. **FINAL TEST in class**

Extra Credit of 1 point on final semester grade: Fill out (thoughtfully, of course) an evaluation of this course on the following website:

<http://evals.wustl.edu>

This is the only Extra Credit. Please do not ask for other opportunities.

Bullet-Point Outline of “Camp” Rules

Students are not customers. Teachers are not employees. Students and teachers have obligations to each other.

Here is what I expect from students:

- You will treat everyone in the class, including the professor, with the respect due to all human beings.
- You will give your full attention to the material, and conduct yourself in an appropriate manner.
- You will agree to do the work outlined in the syllabus on time.
- You will acknowledge that previous academic preparation (e.g., writing skills) will affect your performance in this course.
- You will acknowledge that your perception of effort, by itself, is not enough to justify a distinguished grade.
- You will not plagiarize or otherwise steal the work of others.
- You will not make excuses for your failure to do what you ought.
- You will accept the consequences -- good and bad -- of your actions.

Here is what students can expect from me:

- I will treat you with the respect due to all human beings.
- I will [try to] know your name and treat you as an individual.
- I will not discriminate against you on the basis of your identity or your well-informed viewpoints.
- I will manage the class in a professional manner. That may include educating you in appropriate behavior.
- I will prepare carefully for every class.
- I will begin and end class on time.
- I will teach only in areas of my professional expertise. If I do not know something, I will say so.
- I will conduct scholarly research and publication with the aim of making myself a more informed teacher.
- I will pursue the maximum punishment for plagiarism, cheating, and other violations of academic integrity.
- I will make myself available to you for advising.
- I will maintain confidentiality concerning your performance.
- I will provide you with professional support and write recommendations for you if appropriate.
- I will be honest with you.
- Your grade will reflect the quality of your work and nothing else.
- I am interested in your feedback about the class, but I am more interested in what you learned than how you feel.