

Introduction

The United States of America was conceived in and has been largely been understood as well as defined by its use of political violence. This includes but is not limited to the American revolution, the genocide of the native population, the enslavement of Africans, the civil war, presidential assassinations, lynching, occupations of Central and Latin America as well as the Caribbean and Middle East, interstate wars (declared and undeclared), the persecutions of radicals (on the right as well as the left), international covert actions (assassinations and coups), educational training academies in torture and counter-insurgency, some of the most famous social movements the world has ever known, the terrorist attacks in Oklahoma and 9/11, the occupy-reoccupy movements, police shootings of civilians and the global war on terror. This course will assist students in better understanding what has happened, why it happened and what this political violence has meant for those within the United States as well as those outside of it.

Attendance

Show up, learn, contribute and do not lose points for missing quizzes

Grading

Participation: 20%

- contributing to classroom discussion through informed commentary/reflection about reading and/or prior discussion

Midterm Examination: 40%

- one formal test (20-40%)
 - o there will be a single question, answered in an essay
- an undisclosed number of informal quizzes, administered randomly throughout the semester (0-20%)
 - o if a quiz is missed and there is no University sanctioned excuse, then the student will be issued a "0" for the assignment.
 - o if missed is missed and there is a University sanctioned excuse, then the student will be given a make-up examination.

Final Submission: 40%

- This will be either a comparison of
 - o two distinct forms of violence within America
 - o two distinct forms of violence outside of America
 - o one form of violence within America as well as one form of violence outside of America
 - You can explore causes, dynamics or consequences of US political violence
 - 20 page limit, single-spaced not including references, figures
 - Topic to be discussed with Professor

Reading

Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West
Dee Brown

The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power
Daniel Yergin

Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and its Legacy
Heather Ann Thompson

Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower
William Blum

Schedule

January

9 – Introduction & Overview

16 – Concepts and the Conflict Cycle

23 – Data/Databases and Knowing What are Good Ones

Interstate War

Civil War

One-sided violence

Genocide

Assassinations

Protest

Protest Policing

Police Shooting

COINTELPRO

Riots

Torture

Legal Homicide

30 – Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (1-240)

February

6 – Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (241-450)

13 – The Prize (1-242)

20 – The Prize (243-542)

Midterm Question Delivered

27 – The Prize (543-774)
Midterm Submission

March

13 – Blood in the Water (3-310)

20 – Blood in the Water (311-572)

27 [ISA] – Rogue State (1-161)

April

3 – Rogue State (162-355)

10 – Project Preparation

17 – Project Preparation