

Terrorism and Response

Elliot Chodoff

Fall 2009

Course Number:

Semester: Fall 2009

Class Time: Wednesday, 15:00-18:00

Class Location: 2003 Terrace Bldg.

Office Hours: By Appointment

Location:

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Course Description:

This course will examine the issue of terrorism as a growing form of political violence into the 21st Century. The last three decades of the 20th Century witnessed a phenomenal growth in terrorist activity around the world. Some groups rose and fell quite rapidly, but others have managed sustained campaigns and have achieved spectacular tactical success, among them the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001.

We will investigate the causes, methods and responses involved in the ongoing conflict between terrorist organizations and their adversaries.

Topics covered will include:

- What is terrorism, as distinct from other forms of violence?
- What are the objectives of terrorists?
- What are the strategy and tactics of terrorists? Is suicide terrorism a distinct form of terrorism or another tactic among many?
- Why do terrorists use the tactics of terrorism? Is the use of terrorist tactics ever justified?
- What is the history of terrorism and terrorist organizations?
- What are some of the major terrorist groups active today?
- How do religious beliefs and ideological dogma aid terrorists?
- Does terrorism work? Does it achieve strategic goals?
- Can terrorism be deterred, defeated or prevented? Is there a military solution?
- Is the use of torture ever justified for extracting information from terrorists?
Targeted assassination?

Readings:

Required: Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, New York: Columbia, 1998.

Recommended: Martha Crenshaw (Ed.), *Terrorism in Context*. University Park: Penn State Press, 1995.

Additional reading materials will be made available during the course.

Requirements, grades, and so on

This course has just a few simple requirements: read the assignments, attend class, participate in discussions, write the papers, and pass the tests. I know that these are unique, unheard of requirements, but I'm a kind of unique teacher.

Grades will be based as follows:

In class mid-term exam:	35%
Final exam:	50%
Class participation:	15%

It is not enough to attend class, I expect you to participate intelligently. In order to do this, you must do the readings (at least the required ones), think about them, come to class, listen to others in class (myself and your colleagues), think a bit more, and speak reasonably coherently about your thoughts. Omitting any of these steps will result in severe degradation of performance with an equivalent degradation in grade.

Behavior

In this course we will engage issues of the utmost importance. We will debate questions of life and death; conduct detailed discussions of horrible tragedies, heinous crimes, and strategies for killing innocent people. Given this it is extremely important that we maintain an environment of respect for the people and issues involved and also for each other. Differences of opinion will be the norm. I encourage and demand debate from you, but I will also demand respect for opposing viewpoints. To this end I will tolerate neither personal attacks nor non-class related talking in class, any inappropriate language, or even the hint of the sound of a cell phone ringing.

Questions about anything in this syllabus? E-mail me at ellichod@hotmail.com

Week 1

Introduction – Course Requirements, Expectations and Assorted Bureaucratic Housekeeping

Definitions and Concepts

Readings:



- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Chapter One, "Defining Terrorism"
- Boaz Ganor, "Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist Another Man's Freedom Fighter?"

Week 2 - **Terrorism Strategy**

Readings:

- Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism."

Week 3 - **Terrorist Goals, Targets and Methods**

Readings:

- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Chapter Six, "The Modern Terrorist Mindset: Tactics, Targets, and Technologies"

Week 4 - **A Little History: The Origins of Terrorism - Russian anarchists through the Algerian Case.**

Readings:

- Relevant Chapters in Crenshaw, (Ed.) *Terrorism in Context*

Week 5 & 6 - **Terrorist Organizations in the Arab Israeli Conflict**

The Arab Israeli Conflict - Fedayeen, PLO, Fatah, Hamas, Hizbullah, etc

Readings:

- David Schiller, "A Battlegroup Divided: The Palestinian Fedayeen," in David Rapoport, *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, pp. 90-108.
- Barry Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory*, especially Chs 1-4.

Week 7 - **Holy Terror - Islamic Terrorism - Al Qaeda and Friends.**

Readings:

- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Chapter Four, "Religion and Terrorism."
- Mark Juegensmeyer, "The Logic of Religious Violence," in David Rapoport, *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, pp. 172-193.
- Ami Pedahzur, *Suicide Terrorism*, Chapter 3, "How Can suicide Terrorism be Explained?"

Week 8 - **Mid Term Examination**

Terrorism as Theater and Communication

Readings:

- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Chapter Five, "Terrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion."



Week 9 - The Media and Terrorism

Week 10 - Ethical Issues in Fighting Terrorism

Readings:

- Neta C. Crawford, "Just War Theory on the US Counter Terror War," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1
- Michael Walzer, "Excusing Terror."

Week 11 - Responses I - Military

Readings:

- US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/nsct2006.pdf>

Week 12 - Responses II – Non-military

Readings:

- Daniel Pipes, "God and Mammon: Does Poverty Cause Militant Islam?" *National Interest*, Winter 2001-2002.

Week 13 - Summary, Conclusion, Review

Week 14 - Final Exam