War and Terrorism in the Arab World: The Human Dimension (undergrad, Rochelle Davis, Georgetown, 2013)

The primary focus of this class will be how we as humans fight and create worlds defined by war and terrorism, examining specifically the Arab World. We will examine how war comes to be a part of our lives—as soldiers, fighters, and civilians, and the transitions among those roles. Thus we will concern ourselves with how we normalize war, despite the violence and tragedy that affects us all. Throughout the course we will ask and try to answer a number of questions that people have been and continue to struggle with: How can we do this to each other? What happens to people who engage in killing? What happens to people who experience such violence to themselves and their families? What are the gendered dimensions of war? What does war do to our sense of self and community? How do we think about and deal with refugees? We will also try to understand how we transition as humans from states of peace to states of war and back to states of peace. The course will focus on the period of 1960s at the beginning of the class to the present.

Books to Borrow or Buy (all other readings on Blackboard)

LEARNING OUTCOMES/GOALS:
The students will complete the course having developed the following skills and knowledge:
1) basic knowledge of the wars and terrorism in the Arab World;
2) understanding of concepts and terms in contemporary social science;
3) development of analytical abilities and critical thinking;
4) how to design, conduct, and write up a short research project;
5) how to use primary source data in written work and analysis.

SKILLS PRACTICED OR DEVELOPED:
1) oral presentation skills (focusing on summarizing arguments and presenting research results);
2) basic blogging skills;
3) writing skills (analytical writing about primary source data, summarizing arguments, clarity, organization, and conciseness).

The course will be conducted as a seminar, with the majority of time devoted to discussion aimed at critical understanding of the material, comparisons among the different articles, books, and media.

Expectations and Responsibilities:
I expect you to do all of the reading, to participate actively in the class, to be polite and courteous to me and to your fellow students, and to be intelligent, motivated, and engaged.
Both you and I are bound by the Georgetown Honor Pledge.

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/site_map.html#The_Honor_System

We both are protected by and enjoy principles of academic freedom. From the Faculty Handbook: http://www.georgetown.edu/facultysenate/FacHbk.pdf (p 26)

Academic freedom is essential to teaching and research. Such freedom requires free inquiry, free expression, intellectual honesty, respect for the academic rights of others, and openness to change. The rights and responsibilities exercised within the academic community must be compatible with these requirements. All members of the faculty, in common with all other members of the community, share the responsibility for maintaining a professional atmosphere in which violations of academic freedom and responsibility are unlikely to occur. The University endorses the American Association of University Professors’ 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, with clarifications that place it in the Georgetown University context (see Section XXI).

**Turning in Assignments:**
- Proofread your assignments. One-third of one grade will be deducted for more than five grammar/spelling mistakes.
- Late papers will be reduced by one-third of a grade for each 24 hours they are late.
- Papers should be in 12-point font, double spaced, with footnotes (not endnotes) in a standard font.

**Missing Class:**
**Attendance:** Any absence for any reason will result in a drop in your participation grade by one full grade, IF a make-up assignment is not turned in. You are responsible for getting the notes from the class from a classmate. The make-up assignment is a 300-600 word response addressing the week’s readings. You are responsible for doing this (I will not ask for it or remind you). A failing grade in the class will be earned to anyone with 4 or more absences for any reason.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1) **Weekly Assignments and Participation:** Each week I will send out an assignment for class that is based on the readings. They may be written assignments or presentations, and some will be long and some will be short. You must do them all.

    Participation and Assignments: Weekly, totaling 25% of your grade.

2) **Individual Book Review:** You will select a memoir or novel and read it and write a 2000 word annotated review of it, pulling in material from the class as well as outside. I will provide a separate sheet of instructions on this, along with some suggestions for topics.

    Assignment Due: Friday, November 1 at 5pm via email. 20% of your grade.

3) **Research Project:** You will select a topic of current war/s and terrorism (Due September 11 via email) and construct a blog (public or private) around the topic. The blog will consist of material that you are collecting for what will be your final research paper. That material can be
images, videos, news articles, maps, powerpoints, speeches, blogs, a mix of all of these, and anything else that is relevant. Each week I will look at it and comment, thus you must have something/s posted each week. This material will form the basis of your final paper, which is due on **December 19**. You will present the material and the backbone of your paper on the last day of class (**December 3**). This paper should be in the range of 5000 words.

**Blog: 20% of your grade (Starts on September 17)**  
**Presentation: 10% of your grade (Due December 3)**  
**Paper: 25% of your grade (Due December 19)**

:: COURSE SCHEDULE ::

**September 3**  
Defining Terrorism and War and “the Human Dimension”  

**September 10 – Intellectualizing Conflict and Violence: How Can We Think about War?**  
Melani McAlister. Chapters “Military Multiculturalism” and “Conclusion” in *Epic encounters: culture, media, and U.S. interests in the Middle East since 1945*. University of California Press, 2005  

[[topic due on September 11 via email]]

**September 17 – Historical background on the Arab World & Studying War & Terrorism**  
+Additional articles from the Press.

[[blogsire started]]

**September 24 -- Historical background on the Arab World & Studying War & Terrorism**  
Charles Tripp – pp. 176-319

**October 1 – Fighting and Becoming**  


October 8 – Fighting and Becoming


Ghassan Hage. “‘Comes a Time We are All Enthusiasm’: Understanding Palestinian Suicide Bombers in Times of Exighophobia.” *Public Culture* 15:1, 2003: 65-89.

October 15 – Surviving


October 22 -- Identity and Sectarianism


Additional articles and videos on Syria, TBD

October 29 -- Environment, Technology, and Experts.


or http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/toxic-legacy-of-us-assault-on-fallujah-worse-than-hiroshima-2034065.html

November 5 – Gender and War


*Film: Degrees of Incarceration*

November 12 – Culture Wars


Selections from the Press.

November 19 – Fleeing Wars and Terrorism


Selections from the Press.

November 26 – Fleeing Wars and Terrorism
Humanitarian Aid and War
Non-violent resistance.
Selections TBD

December 3

Presentations
Final papers due **December 19**