

International Human Rights Law & State Crime

CCJ 4938

Terry Coonan, Associate Professor
Graduate Assistant: Vania Llovera

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Office: FSU Human Rights Center
426 W. Jefferson Street

Phone: 644-4550

Fax: 644-4633

E-Mail: tcoonan@admin.fsu.edu

Office Hours: By Appointment

Introduction

This course addresses a dilemma that is centuries-old: what can be done when a nation state or society perpetrates crimes against its own citizens? The course will survey the framework of international human rights law that has evolved since 1945 in response to systematic state crimes such as torture, genocide, and forced disappearances, as well as cultural practices such as female genital mutilation. Required readings include the following books on human rights issues and law:

Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War Against Human Rights and the United Nations (Iain Guest, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990)

We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories From Rwanda (Philip Gourevitch, Picador USA, 1998)

Do They Hear You When You Cry? (Fauziya Kassindja & Layli Miller Bashir, Delta, 1998)

The required readings are journalistic accounts of particular human rights situations—the Dirty War in Argentina, the Rwandan genocide, and the human rights & asylum issue of female genital mutilation as practiced in certain traditional societies of Africa. Students will submit a 8-10 page book review/reaction paper on each of the above titles (*see* course outline for paper due dates). Course lectures will provide a broad introduction to the theory and practice of human rights law, and there will be a comprehensive final on the course lectures at the end of the semester.

Section one of the course will examine the Dirty War waged by the Argentinian government against its own people between 1976 and 1983 (**Behind the Disappearances**). Particular attention will be paid to the forced disappearances and torture that characterized the Latin American military dictatorships of this era. Class lectures include an introduction to international law & the evolution of human rights law, a survey of the U.N. human rights system, and an examination of the role that non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”) play in the human rights field.

Section two of the course will address the topic of genocide and the failure of international law to effectively eradicate this systematic human rights violation (**We**

Wish to Inform You . . .). Class lectures will examine the Nuremberg Trials, the Convention Against Genocide, the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the International Criminal Court, the Pinochet litigation, and the role of truth commissions.

Section three of the course will examine the practice of female genital mutilation and its treatment by U.S. asylum law (**Do They Hear You When You Cry**). Lectures will address international refugee law, recent trends in U.S. asylum law, women's rights as human rights, and the issue of cultural relativism.

Grading

Students will be graded for class participation & quiz grades, for the three papers they write, and for a comprehensive final exam. A student's final grade for the course will be weighted as follows:

Quizzes & Class Participation:	10%
Paper #1:	20%
Paper #2:	20%
Paper #3:	20%
Final Exam:	30%

Quizzes & Class Participation

I do not take attendance, but if you are called upon and are not present, your class participation grade for that day is a zero (as it likewise is if you are called upon and are unprepared). Moreover, random quizzes will be administered to provide additional "motivation" for staying current on the daily readings. If you are absent without a valid excuse on a day that a quiz is given, you also receive a zero for that particular quiz.

Papers

Each of the three papers is a book review of one of the required texts in addition to your own thinking and conclusions regarding certain questions that will be posed to you. The purpose of each paper is two-fold: 1) to see that you have read and critically reflected upon the text; and 2) to see that you have critically reflected upon aspects of international human rights law that have been raised in class lectures.

Papers must be printed or typed on 8.5" x 11" white paper. Use one side of the paper only. A title page is required, containing the title of the paper, your name, and the date. Text is to be double-spaced, using 11 or 12 point font. Pages must be numbered (though page one is never numbered). It goes without saying that grammar, punctuation, and spelling are also graded. Papers are due at the beginning of the class period identified in the course outline. Late work will be marked down one complete letter grade per day late (i.e., A- paper becomes B-, etc.). The sole exceptions are genuine medical excuses or emergencies beyond your control. Written documentation will be required in such cases.

Final Exam

The final exam for the course will be a comprehensive test of the lecture materials. It will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Grading Scale

Excellent:	A = 100-93	A- = 92-90	
Good (Above Average):	B+ = 89-88	B = 87-83	B- = 82-80
Average:	C+ = 79-78	C = 77-73	C- = 72-70
Below Average:	D+ = 69-68	D = 67-63	D- = 62-60
Unacceptable:	F = 59-0		

Honor Code

The Florida State University Honor Code will be adhered to and enforced. Specific honor code violations, both personal and academic can be found in the University Bulletin. Violations will be prosecuted.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center. (SDRC)
2. Bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating you need academic accommodations. This should be done within the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

Course Outline & Reading Assignments

August 23:	Course Introduction
August 25:	Guest, chapters 1-3
August 27:	Guest, chapters 4-6
August 30:	Guest, chapters 7-9
September 1:	Guest, chapters 10-12
September 3:	Guest, chapters 13-15
September 6:	No Class (Labor Day)
September 8:	No Class
September 10:	Special Class: <i>Rosenstrasse</i> Film Premiere, 7:30 PM, SLB
September 13:	Guest, chapters 16-18
September 15:	Guest, chapters 19-21
September 17:	Guest, chapters 22-24
September 20:	Guest, chapters 25-27
September 22:	Guest, chapters 28-30 & aftermath

September 24:	No Reading
September 27:	1st Paper Due
September 29:	Gourevitch, pp. 15-43
October 1:	Gourevitch, pp. 47-84
October 4:	Gourevitch, pp. 85-131
October 6:	Gourevitch, pp. 132-171
October 8:	Gourevitch, pp. 177-226
October 11:	Gourevitch, pp.227-274
October 13:	Gourevitch, pp. 277-320
October 15:	Gourevitch, pp. 321-353
October 18:	No Reading
October 20:	No Reading
October 22:	2nd Paper Due
October 25:	Kassindja, pp.1-37
October 27:	Kassindja, pp. 38-79
October 29:	Kassindja, pp. 80-118
November 1:	Kassindja, pp. 119-167
November 3:	Kassindja, pp. 168-210
November 5:	No Class (Homecoming)
November 8:	Kassindja, pp.211-249
November 10:	Kassindja, pp.250-292
November 12:	No Class, Kassindja, pp. 293-321
November 15:	Kassindja, pp. 322-378
November 17:	Kassindja, pp. 379-416
November 19:	Kassindja, pp. 417-450
November 22:	Kassindja, pp. 451-478
November 24:	No Class
November 26:	No Class
November 29:	Kassindja, pp.479-520
December 1:	No Reading
December 3:	3rd Paper Due . . . Final Exam Review