FRESHMAN HONORS SEMINAR:
STATES, JUSTICE, AND VIOLENCE IN MODERN HISTORY
Prof. David Engel

Students in the seminar will work together to explain an apparent conundrum of modern history: although modern states and legal systems are generally supposed to have made it possible for individuals and communities to resolve their differences without resorting to violence, the twentieth century has witnessed some of the most horrific acts of collective violence ever recorded in human history. They will do so first by examining the principal ideas that have guided modern constitutional states in confronting and controlling social violence, then by considering historical examples of how such states have performed their roles as guarantors of justice and public peace. The goal of the seminar’s sessions will be collectively to develop one or more hypotheses that fit those examples. Students will then test those hypotheses individually by conducting case studies of their own and will present their findings to the group. In order to help them succeed in their task, parts of several sessions will be devoted to exploring the techniques of scholarly research and analysis.

During the final three sessions, students will report orally on their individual studies for approximately 20-25 minutes. Following discussion of their presentations, they will write papers of 5,000-7,000 words, to be submitted Wednesday, 19 December, at 5:00 pm.

Session topics and assigned readings are listed below. Students should read all listed materials before the session for which they are assigned. Readings marked with the symbol (B) can be downloaded from the seminar’s Blackboard site; those marked with (R) can be obtained in the Reserve Reading Room of Bobst Library.

SYLLABUS

1. Introduction: Defining the Problem (5 September)

2. Theories of Violence (12 September)
   Donald L. Horowitz, The Deadly Ethnic Riot, pp. 1-42, 522-65 (R)

3. Theories of the State (19 September)
   Jean Bodin, Six Books of the Commonwealth, Book I, Chapters 1, 8, 10 (B)
   John Locke, Second Treatise of Government, §§ 87-168, 199-210 (B)
   Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation (B)

4. The Evolution of the Sovereign Constitutional State (26 September)
   Joseph R. Strayer, On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State (R)
   Gianfranco Poggi, The Development of the Modern State, pp. 60-149 (R)

5. Law, Justice, and Violence in Early Modern Europe (3 October)
   Julius R. Ruff, Violence in Early Modern Europe, pp. 73-116 (R)
6. Riots and Restorative Justice (10 October)
   George Rudé, *The Crowd in History*, pp. 3-16, 195-269 (R)
   Michael Feldberg, *The Turbulent Era* (R)

7. Interethnic Violence: Case Studies — Jews, Ukrainians, and Russians (17 October)
   J. D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, eds., *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, pp. 44-61, 248-89, 314-72 (R)

8. Interethnic Violence: Case Studies — Whites and Blacks in the United States (24 October)

9. Interethnic Violence: Case Studies — Muslims and Hindus in India (31 October)
   Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*, pp. 3-18, 95-111, 119-300 (R)

10. States, Ethnic Cleansing, and Genocide (7 November)

11. International Controls on Violence (14 November)

12. Student Presentations (28 November)

13. Student Presentations (5 December)

14. Student Presentations (12 December)

Office: 53 Washington Square South, room 103
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**Please note:**
Class will not be held Wednesday, 21 November.
On the following Wednesdays, office hours will be held from 1:00-2:00 instead of at their regular time: 12 September, 19 September, 24 October, 28 November