References marked with the asterisk (*) are required readings for the lecture. Students are expected to come to class having read this material. Other entries are recommended as readings for the lecture of the day or will be used as references by the instructor. References to articles in journals are given in full. References to E-Books and books physically on reserve are abbreviated. Full bibliographic information and call numbers are listed on Moodle.

**JAN. 5**  
*Introduction to the Course*

E-Book.  
Available online through Queen’s Library.

**JAN. 7**  
*The Myth of Redemptive Violence and the Nature of Religion*

E-Journal.

Walter Wink, “Facing the Myth of Redemptive Violence,”  
[www2.goshen.edu/~joannab/women/wink99.pdf](http://www2.goshen.edu/~joannab/women/wink99.pdf)  
“*Star Wars* Origins – Joseph Campbell and the Hero’s Journey.”  

**SACRIFICE**

**JAN. 12**  
*The Myth of Redemptive Violence and Sacrifice*

E-Reserve.  

Discussion topic:  
How did sacrificial ritual originate according to René Girard? What critiques have been made of Girard’s theory?
JAN. 14  *Animal Sacrifices in Popular Hinduism*


**Discussion Topic:** Who is the goddess Durga and how does her mythology reflect key concepts in classical Hindu ethics and spirituality?

JAN. 19  *Protest Against Sacrifice in Hindu Thought*


**Discussion Topic:** What ethical and spiritual dimensions are claimed for vegetarianism in contemporary culture? Are any of these claims disputed?

**COLLECTIVE PERSECUTION**

JAN. 21  *Othering and Communal Conflict*


Discussion Topic: **What were the results of Stanley Milgram’s experiments on obedience to authority; how have his results been regarded in subsequent work on this area of human behaviour?**

**JAN. 26 The Ideology of Sinhalese Nationalism**

Guest Lecturer: Morgan Oddie, Ph.D. candidate, Queen’s University


Discussion Topic: **What were the key social and political reasons that led the Tamils of Sri Lanka to secede from the rest of the island in recent decades?**

**JAN. 28 René Girard: The Politics of Desire**


Discussion Topic: **According to modern therapists what is meant by “identifying with the perpetrator?” How is this syndrome manifested in victims of violence?**

**FEB. 2 The Scottish Witch as Scapegoat**


Discussion Topic: **Accusations and persecutions of child witches are current in parts of Africa. How to explain this phenomenon?**
FEB.  4  Muslim-Christian Rivalries in Bosnia


Discussion Topic: What is the legend of Prince Lazar and the battle of Kosovo? How has it contributed to the creation of Serbian consciousness?

FEB.  9  Resisting the Scapegoat Mechanism


Discussion Topic: How did Gandhi’s ideas on non-violence influence Martin Luther King?

RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO TRAUMA

FEB. 11 Trauma and the Combat Myth

*Barbara Whitmer, “Girard and the Trauma Victim,” The Violence Mythos, 125-63. E-Reserve.

“The Hero’s Journey: The Mythic Structure of Joseph Campbell’s Monomyth.”
http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's_journey.htm

Discussion Topic: How do the PTSD symptoms of combat veterans and rape victims compare?

MID-TERM TAKE-HOME EXAM ASSIGNED.

[ FEB.  15-19  No Classes. Reading Week]
**Feb. 23 Heroic Asceticism**


**Discussion Topic:** Many young North American women engage in the practice of cutting (often a ritualized form of self-injury). How is this to be explained?

**Feb. 25 Martyrdom**

*“Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity 203,”* in *Internet Medieval Sourcebook.*

*“http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.asp”


**Discussion Topic:** During the Vietnam War, the Western world was startled by the sight of Buddhist nuns and monks setting themselves on fire. Recently, the same phenomenon has been reported in Tibet. How is this activity compatible with Buddhist teachings on non-violence?

**Mid-Term Take Home Exam Due**

**Mar. 1 The Church and the Residential Schools**


Discussion Topic: **What is “poisonous pedagogy” according to psychoanalyst Alice Miller? How is the concept used in current research?**

**MAR. 3**  
*The Violent Rejection of the Foreign*


Discussion Topic: **What were the practices and beliefs surrounding the Ghost dance among North American Plains Indians in the 19th century?**

**MAR. 8**  
*Gandhi and the Struggle for Self-Determination in India*

*M. K. Gandhi, Non-Violent Resistance [Satyagraha], 220-42. E-_reserve.*

*“India: Defying the Crown” (A Force More Powerful Series, 2000).*  


Discussion Topic: **What is Krishna’s counsel to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita when Arjuna hesitates to fight his relatives? What ethical and religious principles underlie Krishna’s advice?**

**MAR. 10**  
*NO CLASS. INSTRUCTOR AWAY*
TERRORISM

MAR. 15  A Survey of Global Terrorism

Guest Lecturer: Prof. Ali Dizboni, Royal Military College.

MAR. 17  Terrorism in Canada

Guest Lecturer: Prof. Lorne Dawson, University of Waterloo

Public Lecture: Prof. Lorne Dawson, 6:30 p.m. Dupuis Auditorium.
Bonus Marks available.

MAR. 22  Fanaticism and the True Believer


Discussion Topic: What is the ideology of the “Christian Identity” movement and how is it associated with the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995?

MAR. 24  Heroic Suicide

*Bloom, “Devising a Theory of Suicide Terror,” Dying to Kill, 76-100.
*Ami Pedahzur, “Turning to Suicide Terrorism: The LTTE and the PKK,” Suicide Terrorism, 70-90. E-Reserve.

Pedahzur, “Turning to Suicide Terrorism,” Suicide Terrorism, 43-69.

Discussion Topic: Is it possible to construct a psychological profile of a suicide bomber?
**MAR. 29**  
* I.S.I.L. A Terrorist State?

* Mehdi Hasan, “How Islamic is the Islamic State? Not At All,” New Republic  
  March 2015.  


Jeffery Kaplan and Christopher P. Costa, “The Islamic State and the New  

*Discussion Topic:* During the French Revolution, there was an era known as “the reign  
  of terror.” Why did it receive this name and how was terror used as  
  a means of political control?

**ESSAY PROPOSALS DUE**

**SUMMING UP**

**MAR. 31**  
* The Intersection of Religion and Violence

*William Cavanaugh, “The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and  
  Modern Conflict.” On Moodle.

Benjamin Grant Purzycki, “Religion and Violence: An Anthropological Study  
  on Religious Belief and Violent Behavior,” Sceptic (January 2011).  
  An Anthropological Study on Religious Belief and Violent Behavior

*Discussion Topic:* Compare the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem in 637 A.D. with the  
  Christian conquest of Jerusalem in 1099.

**FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM ASSIGNED**

**APR. 14**  
* Final Exam and Essays Due by 4:00 PM in Instructor’s Office*