

**SOCIOLOGY 484**

**FALL 2009**

**METHODS SEMINAR: SOCIOLOGY OF GENOCIDE**

**Professor: Myrna Goodman**  
**CONTACT: [myrna.goodman@sonoma.edu](mailto:myrna.goodman@sonoma.edu)**

**Course Description:**

Genocide is generally defined as the deliberate mass murder of a social group, usually by a government or state. We will anchor our examination and analysis of genocide by studying the sociological processes and historical factors that characterize the process of genocide. During the semester in addition to investigating the Holocaust, we will also examine post-war and contemporary occurrences of genocide.

This course will integrate and use comparative-historical methodology with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Students who have taken this course have compared the experiences of child survivors of the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide; investigated resistance to genocide; interviewed Holocaust survivors, explored the variation in refugee experiences; and studied the influence of racial policies in the genocidal process.

**Prerequisites:** This course will be a Methods Seminar. In order to enroll, students are required to have passed Sociology 300 with a 'C-' or better grade.

**GE:** No

**Course Goals and Learning Objectives:**

**By the end of the semester students will:**

- Understand the various and complex definitions of genocide.
- Understand how the processes of genocide often grow in a context where individuals remain silent and indifferent in the face of the oppression of groups who are defined as “other.”
- Understand how technological expertise and bureaucratic infrastructures can be used to implement destructive policies ranging from social engineering to mass death and genocide.
- Have a heightened awareness of how the potential for genocide in the contemporary world is facilitated through the uses and abuses of governmental power.
- Understand how state inaction, citizen silence and indifference in the face of human rights violations continue to lead to large-scale mass death.

**COURSE TEXTS:** TBA

**FINAL PROJECT:**

The final project for this course will be a sociologically informed research paper using a methodology informed by comparative-historical methods and a qualitative or quantitative research method.