

THEME SEMINAR
Uprisings, Riots, Rebellions: State, Racial, Populist and Political Violence in Global History
HIS 532
Professor Robert Chase
W 2:40-5:30 - N-318

In the aftermath of global responses to George Floyd's murder and the insurrection at the Washington, D.C. Capitol, this course asks our students to historicize and rethink histories of violence through the lens of new histories and approaches to writing state atrocity, urban uprisings, and populist street violence and vigilantism. As such, this theme course explores new and exciting work that reconsiders state, racial, and street violence as a matter of political uprisings and state reprisal. Through a critical historical lens, we will reconsider the meanings and differences between what historians and political pundits might name as riots, senseless violence, insurrections, uprisings, revolutions, terror, and liberation. The course will rethink sites of violence through a global and transnational lens and one that spans three centuries (18th, 19th, and 20th centuries). Course topics will include slave revolts; "race riots" and historical memory; and urban uprisings as an expression of political discontent and resistance to global systems of white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. We will also take up new work on populist violence and vigilantism through new work on lynching's and public memory; extremist street violence; the history of gun violence as racial and political violence; genocides and "race wars;" and, domestic terrorism and political violence (from Nazi Germany to the Oklahoma City bombing). We will also read new work on state violence as political reprisal, racial repression, and as part of a global campaign of anti-insurgent thought and practice during the Cold War era. Topics of state violence will include global and domestic systems of policing and incarceration; border control, immigration detention and deportation; political violence in totalitarian regimes; and state campaigns against guerilla insurgencies during the Cold War. Despite popular narratives that argue that we have entered a new millennium as a less violent age (particularly the claims of Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker about the decline of violence), the persistence and even the intensification of modern-day violence requires that we think historically about this phenomenon to better disentangle the many meanings of violence as social, cultural, political, and racial expression. **Pre-requisite: Enrollment in a History MA or PhD Program or permission of the instructor with enrollment under the HIS course number.**