

Carleton University
Bachelor in Global and International Studies

Winter 2022

GINS 4090 E: Human Rights & Video in a Globalized World
Tuesdays 2:35pm - 5:25pm
Lecture Location: TBA

I acknowledge and respect
the Algonquin First Nation,
on whose traditional territory
the Carleton University campus is located.

Instructor: Associate Professor Sandra Fahy, Ph.D.
Office Hours: Tuesday's 12-2pm via Zoom
Office Location: at the moment, via Zoom
Office Phone: not yet assigned
Email: smfahy@gmail.com (Carleton Email is being created)

Class Dates:

January 11, 18, 25
February 1, 8, 15, (Note February 22nd is Reading Week)
March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
April 5, 12

Introducing our Course

“Human Rights & Video in a Globalized World: Is Internet a Crime Scene?”

In this class we examine video footage and human rights violations. We will combine theory and case studies in our exploration of the intersection of these two phenomena. We start with an obvious point of departure: how video is useful for capturing rights violations when they occur, and seeking justice. Handheld recording devices and social media platforms enable almost anyone to capture and circulate footage of rights abuses, sometimes as they occur. Activists celebrate these technologies for empowering civil society to demand redress, raise global awareness for correcting past wrongs, and strive for justice. In the contemporary, individuals and minority groups harness video to amplify complaints against perpetrators.

But here a natural question arises, and this brings a turn of direction in our course of study. If everyone is filming – victims, witnesses, perpetrators – then the tidy notion that video documentation leads easily to justice and redress is hardly so simple. Cheap and easy access to

technology enables both victims and perpetrators to employ the same materials toward opposing causes. In our era of misinformation and post-truth, this is all the more troublesome. Technology is not inherently democratic. Is it rather, unexpectedly, totalitarian? In this course, we will explore the intersection of human rights and video in our contemporary globalized world. We will identify the earliest origins of human rights and video, where state actors used the technology to exonerate their role in atrocity – a phenomena that continues today.

Drawing on interdisciplinary human rights scholarship and case studies across the world, we will investigate the early relationship of video and rights violations. We will complete our study in the contemporary, where we learn how groups like *Bellingcat* and *Forensic Architecture* use video to identify perpetrators – demonstrating that the internet is, indeed, a crime scene.

(Please note, this class will *not* involve watching videos that demonstrate physical integrity rights violations).

Reading Materials:

Most of the materials for our course are in the public domain as PDFs or videos. You are welcome to purchase the books yourself, or take them out from the library. I will also upload all of the materials to *Brightspace*.

Evaluation

Weekly attendance and participation 15%
Presentation of one of our course readings: 15%
Presentation of your Essay Concept 10%
Mid-term Essay (Due Class 7) 30%
Final Essay (Due final day, Class 13) 30%

Details of Evaluation:

Weekly attendance and participation 15%

Students are expected to attend all classes wherever possible, unless they have a reasonable reason for not attending. Class time will be used to examine the readings, hear other students' ideas, and explore related cases in history and the contemporary. You are expected to come to class having identified key portions of the text which really stood out for you: Was something particularly poignant in the reading? Was there something you dis/agreed with? Is there something in the reading you are doubtful of? Something you think is no longer the case now, or was once not true and is now true – due to the passage of time? Class time will be used to explore how we each interacted intellectually with the text at hand. Speaking up about your thoughts, or at least identifying key passages which impressed upon you is the basis of this.

Presentation of Course Reading 15%

Students are expected to select a reading from the course syllabus and present this reading to the class. All other students are also expected to have read the reading. The presenter will identify the main findings or argument of the article, the main evidence provided by the author(s) in support of their argument, and the implications of these findings. Throughout the presentation turn to the reading at hand to identify key points that are worth highlighting. You may bring in case studies or examples from history or the contemporary which relate to your presentation. The presentation should last 20 minutes, followed by a 15-minute discussion with the class which the presenter will be charged with leading.

Presentation of Essay Concept 10%

Students will present their essay topic idea, argument and evidence that will support their argument. This is intended as a preliminary exercise to help you map out the preparation stage of writing your essay. This is not intended to be a perfect and complete talk on your essay, but your presentation should indicate what you are considering writing on, and how you hope to do this. Part of this assignment involves receiving feedback from the class in terms of questions or solicitations for elaboration. These are intended to help develop your essay idea. Each student will spend about ten minutes presenting their essay idea. Your concept presentation could be as specific to include: a working title; a brief description of the issues to be addressed; a brief explanation of the theoretical approach; and a preliminary bibliography.

Mid-term Essay 30%

Designed around a topic of interest to you which you have already developed and presented orally in the Presentation of Essay assignment above. The essay will relate to our course subject in some manner. Your essay should be your original thoughts and writing, of between 2,000-3000 words. This essay should be delivered to the Student Writing Services for review, and the recommendations incorporated, before submission. Please see: <https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/> Evidence that your essay was brought to this service should be attached with your submission. Evidence could be: your marked up essay from staff, a receipt of your visit from staff, or etc. If the services are inundated, you should show evidence that you attended one of the Writing Consultation Services prior to submitting your mid-term essay.

<https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/writing-consultation-sessions/>

Final Essay 30%

This essay is a revision, reworking and rewriting of your mid-term essay. The purpose of this exercise is to enable you to have multiple experiences of feedback (the presentation of your essay idea, the submission of your essay to the writing services, the feedback from your professor after submission of the mid-term essay) and then your engagement with the versions of the essay over time. The final essay should be a superior version of each of these former iterations. It should be as flawless as possible. It is a further refinement, development and presentation of your ideas. This version should be brought to the writing services prior to submission and their recommendations incorporated. Evidence of this should be attached to

your essay upon submission. This assignment is due the last day of class. An additional 2,000 words should be added to the original essay form.

Please ensure that you do not intentionally or unintentionally use the ideas or writing of others without referencing this writing. Be sure to read Carleton University's statement on plagiarism and how to avoid it: <https://carleton.ca/economics/courses/writing-preliminaries/pammett-on-plagiarism-and-paraphrasing/> There are significant consequences for plagiarism. Remember, your ideas and writing are valuable. You can reference others while building your thoughts in writing.

Please see the end of this syllabus for elaborations on how your writing will be assessed.

Additional Helpful Information

Carleton University has a duty to accommodate students with institutional needs. Please see information on the following page. <https://carleton.ca/pmc/faculty-and-instructors/institutional-obligations/> Their website states, "Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying their needs for disability-related accommodation to the Paul Menton Centre by booking an intake appointment with a PMC Coordinator, and bringing appropriate documentation to the first meeting." Please ensure that you do this, so that you can have the best experience of accommodation at Carleton.

There are deadlines for this process. They are: "In-class tests: 2 weeks before the date of the in-class test/exam. CUTV midterms: Student must meet with or notify PMC coordinator at least 2 weeks before the 1st midterm exam. Formal Exams (December, April, July, or August): Last day for course withdrawal in the term. See Carleton dates and deadlines for specific dates." (<https://carleton.ca/registrar/registration/dates/>)

Carleton University is your intellectual home, and for you to make the most of your experience here be sure to reach out and utilize all the services this wonderful university has to offer. If you ever need any help with this, I am here to help you! Remember, I was once an undergraduate too.

Here are some links for helpful resources. Make use of what they offer, you deserve it!

Mental Health: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-mental-health/>

Substance Use: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/safe-substance-use/>

Care and Support: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-care-and-support/>

Rights & Responsibilities: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-rights-and-responsibilities/>

Emergency Fund: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-emergency-fund/>

Course Copyright

"My lectures and course materials (including all PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and similar materials) are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright and intellectual

property of all course materials. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial purposes without my express written consent.”

Use this Checklist for Formatting before submitting your Written Assignments

Is my 1.) name, 2.) student number, 3.) course number, and 4.) TA’s name on the first page?

Did I title my paper?

Did I number the pages?

Did I leave a 1 inch margin on the side?

Did I satisfy the recommended writing length for the assignment?

Did I add a bibliography? (see details on that below).

Did I use 12 point font?

Did I write in Times New Roman or Calibri font?

Did I spell check and grammar check?

If submitted electronically, did I submit the document in word or PDF form?

(Please note these helpful tips for common errors such as: Apostrophes indicate the possessive case, i.e. belonging to. For example: That is Professor Fahy’s adorable cat! (Means: The cat belongs to Professor Fahy, and it is adorable!). For singular nouns, use apostrophe + s, e.g. Rousseau’s account. For plural nouns, use an apostrophe alone, e.g. voters’ concerns.

Because “its” (i.e. belonging to ‘it’) is a possessive pronoun (like ‘his’ or ‘her’) it needs no apostrophe.

An apostrophe with “it”, i.e. it’s, is a contraction of ‘it is’. But, “It’s” = it is. Its = belonging to it.)

As someone who is not great at spelling and grammar, trust me, I know it’s not easy. Please be patient with yourself. Write your ideas out, give yourself time to complete the grammar and spelling check before submitting. Be sure to make use of the writing services at the university! They are free and fun!!

Class Schedule

Class One: January 11

Overview and Origin of the Study

Read Syllabus Entirely, Assign Presentation Dates for Readings: one reading per student.

Discuss and explore: Share thoughts and associations with the two core phrases in our course title “video” and “human rights violations.”

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Sam Gregory (2015) Ubiquitous witnesses: who creates the evidence and the live(d) experience of human rights violations? *Information, Communication & Society*, 18:11, 1378-1392, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2015.1070891](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1070891)

Explore images and video, in public domain, related to cases identified in Sam Gregory’s essay.

Watch “How False Testimony and a Massive U.S. Propaganda Machine Bolstered George H.W. Bush’s War on Iraq”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkRyIMGLPMU&ab_channel=DemocracyNow%21

Class Two: January 18

Video and Reconstruction/ Archive

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Jay D Aronson, McKenna Cole, Alex Hauptmann, Dan Miller, Bradley Samuels, Reconstructing Human Rights Violations Using Large Eyewitness Video Collections: The Case of Euromaidan Protester Deaths, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, Volume 10, Issue 1, February 2018, Pages 159–178, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huy005>

Aronson, Jay D. (2017) "Preserving Human Rights Media for Justice, Accountability, and Historical Clarification," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal*: Vol. 11: Issue 1: 82-99 <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/gsp/vol11/iss1/9/>

Class Three: January 25

Video and Evidence (Syria)

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Wessels, J. (2016). YouTube and evidencing war crimes; the role of digital video for transitional justice in Syria. *Tidskriftet POLITIK*, 19(4), 30-52.
[http://portal.research.lu.se/portal/en/publications/youtube-and-evidencing-warcrimes-the-role-of-digital-video-for-transitional-justice-in-syria\(e8fed1df-0ec6-4805-8622-fd143a9210f9\).html](http://portal.research.lu.se/portal/en/publications/youtube-and-evidencing-warcrimes-the-role-of-digital-video-for-transitional-justice-in-syria(e8fed1df-0ec6-4805-8622-fd143a9210f9).html)

Eyes on Aleppo: Eyes on Aleppo Visual Evidence Analysis of Human Rights Violations Committed in Aleppo, July-Dec 2016
https://media.syrianarchive.org/blog/5th_blog/Eyes%20on%20Aleppo.pdf

Class Four: February 1 Testimony, Truth, Affect (Canada)

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Michael Richardson & Kerstin Schankweiler (2020) Introduction: Affective Witnessing as Theory and Practice, *Parallax*, 26:3, 235-253, DOI: [10.1080/13534645.2021.1883301](https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2021.1883301)

Naomi Angel (2012) Before Truth: The Labors of Testimony and the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 53:2, 199-214, DOI: [10.1080/14735784.2012.680257](https://doi.org/10.1080/14735784.2012.680257)

Presentation of Essay Concept 10% - all students.

Class Five: February 8 Witness and Memory

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Cecilie Ihlebæk, Tonja Løve, Dag Erik Eilertsen & Svein Magnussen (2003) Memory for a staged criminal event witnessed live and on video, *Memory*, 11:3, 319-327, DOI: [10.1080/09658210244000018](https://doi.org/10.1080/09658210244000018)

Heather M. Kleider-Offutt, Beth B. Stevens & Megan Capodanno (2021) He did it! Or did I just see him on Twitter? Social media influence on eyewitness identification, *Memory*, DOI: [10.1080/09658211.2021.1953080](https://doi.org/10.1080/09658211.2021.1953080)

Class Six: February 15 Eyewitness Video

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Sandra Ristovska (2016) The rise of eyewitness video and its implications for human rights: Conceptual and methodological approaches, *Journal of Human Rights*, 15:3, 347-360, DOI: [10.1080/14754835.2015.1132157](https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2015.1132157)

Sam Gregory, *Cameras Everywhere: Ubiquitous Video Documentation of Human Rights, New Forms of Video Advocacy, and Considerations of Safety, Security, Dignity and Consent*, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, Volume 2, Issue 2, July 2010, Pages 191–207
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huq002>

February 22nd is Reading Week

Class Seven: March 1 (*Mid-Term Essay Due Class 7*) **Perpetrator Testimony**

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Raya Morag, *Introduction to Perpetrator Cinema: Confronting Genocide in Cambodian Documentary* Columbia University Press, 2020

Kelebogile Zvobgo (2019) Designing truth: Facilitating perpetrator testimony at truth commissions, *Journal of Human Rights*, 18:1, 92-110, DOI: [10.1080/14754835.2018.1543017](https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2018.1543017)

Class Eight: March 8 **Video Truths**

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Stuart Allan, Prasun Sonwalkar & Cynthia Carter (2007) Bearing witness: citizen journalism and human rights issues, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 5:3, 373-389, DOI: [10.1080/14767720701662139](https://doi.org/10.1080/14767720701662139)

Stuart Allan & Chris Peters (2015) Visual truths of citizen reportage: four research problematics, *Information, Communication & Society*, 18:11, 1348-1361, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2015.1061576](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1061576)

Class Nine: March 15 **Deception**

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Wisława Szymborska (1976), "In Praise of Feeling Bad About Yourself" Translated from the Polish by Stanisław Barańczak and Clare Cavanagh

Nicola Perugini and Neve Gordon, *The Human Right to Dominate*, Oxford University Press 2015; Introduction: Human Rights as Domination; Chapter 3: The Human Right to Kill; Chapter 4: The Human Right to Colonize

Review the case details and view video evidence from Forensic Architecture: <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/lethal-warning-the-killing-of-luai-kahil-and-amir-a-nimrah>

Class Ten: March 22 (NOTE: somewhat longer readings!)

Truth Detection

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Eyal Weizman, "Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability" Zone Books 2017, Read: Part One "At the Threshold of Detectability" p.13-47 and "What is Forensic Architecture?" 51-129

Class Eleven: March 29 (NOTE: somewhat longer readings!)

Forensics

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Eyal Weizman, "Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability" Zone Books 2017, "The Forensic Dilemma" 133-213

Eyal Weizman, "Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability" Zone Books 2017, "Ground Truths" 217-304

Class Twelve: April 5 (China and Vietnam)

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Magnus Fiskesjö, The Return of the Show Trial: China's Televised "Confessions" July 1, 2017 Volume 15, Issue 13, Number 1, Article ID 5052 <https://apjif.org/2017/13/Fiskesjo.html>

Christian Sorace; Extracting Affect: Televised Cadre Confessions in China. *Public Culture* 1 January 2019; 31 (1): 145–171. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-7181871>

Scripted and Staged: Behind the Scenes of China's Forced TV Confessions RSDL Monitor – available at RSDLmonitor.com <https://safeguarddefenders.com/sites/default/files/wp->

rsdl/uploads/2018/04/SCRIPTED-AND-STAGED-Behind-the-scenes-of-Chinas-forced-televised-confessions.pdf

Safeguard Defenders, Coerced on Camera: Televised Confessions in Vietnam (2020)
<https://safeguarddefenders.com/en/coerced-camera>

Class Thirteen: April 12 *(Final Paper Due)*
Video Confession (Syria, Russia, USA, UK)

Review and identify core concepts / arguments in:

Patrick Wintour and Bethan McKernan, "Inquiry strikes blow to Russian denials of Syria chemical attack," Fri 7 Feb 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/07/inquiry-strikes-blow-to-russian-denials-of-syria-chemical-attack>

Forensic Architecture, "Chemical Attacks in Douma," <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/chemical-attacks-in-douma>

BBC, "Russia says Syrian 'chemical attack' was staged" 13 April 2018,
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43747922>

Writing Assessment Rubric

This is adapted from a rubric developed by Pablo Gaston at Berkeley, Teaching and Resource Center.

	Excellent	Proficient	Fair	Inadequate
Thesis	Thesis is debatable and clearly presented in the opening and concluding sections of the paper.	Thesis is debatable and is evident in the argument, but is not clearly stated.	Thesis is unclear, and it takes work for the reader to fish it out of the text. Or, thesis is self-evident and not debatable.	There is no evident thesis.

Argument	Argument is presented clearly and logically. Logical points build directly upon the thesis and prior points. Counter-arguments are addressed, dismantled, and folded into the main argument of the paper.	Argument is presented clearly and logically, but points do not necessarily build on each other. Counterarguments are addressed, but many are left hanging or are dealt with inadequately.	Argument is rambling, and there are contradictions left unaddressed. Counterarguments may be presented, but are left unaddressed.	There is no discernable argument, or no alternative interpretation is presented.
Originality	Argument is original and creative. Goes substantially beyond points raised in lecture and readings. Concepts are related to each other in interesting and creative ways.	Argument is strong and interesting, but plays it safe and does not push boundaries. Concepts are put in conversation with each other.	Argument is expository rather than analytical. Concepts are described, but dealt with separately and not explicitly related to each other.	Argument is boring, weak and incoherent.
Organization	Clear organization with a natural flow. Includes an introduction, transition sentences to connect major ideas, and conclusion. There are few or no grammar or spelling errors. Minimal passive voice. Ideas and evidence are correctly cited.	Clear organization, with introduction, transitions and conclusion, but writing is not always fluid. There are several grammar or spelling errors. Ideas and evidence are correctly cited.	Organization is unclear or without necessary component parts. Significant grammar or spelling errors (but not both). Ideas and evidence are correctly cited.	Little discernable organization. Significant grammar and spelling errors. Ideas and evidence are not correctly cited, or not cited at all.
Use of Evidence	Each logical point is backed up by one or more examples. Evidence is strong and sufficient to advance the argument. Potential counter-arguments are accounted for and addressed with evidence.	Each logical point is backed up by one or more examples. Evidence advances the argument, but it may not be sufficient. Potential counter-arguments are accounted for, but may not be sufficiently addressed with evidence.	Several points of the argument are left without evidence. Evidence is insufficient.	A few pieces of evidence are thrown in here or there, but not used to defend the main argument.
Application of Readings/ Concepts	Demonstrates solid understanding of the major themes of the course, using readings and lectures to define concepts. Argument is placed within the broad discussions outlined in the course.	Concepts are defined, but the author does not demonstrate a solid understanding of the major themes of the course relevant to the argument.	Course readings are used. Concepts are left undefined, or poorly defined. Little broader framework is used.	Paper mentions course readings, but there is little demonstration of how the paper relates to the course.

