

Grief & Resistance: Social Responses to American Gun Violence

Taught as a Core First-Year “Enduring Questions” Course alongside the paired Theology course:
Grief & Resistance: Theological Responses to Climate Change | Boston College, Fall 2021

Course fulfills credits in Social Science and Cultural Diversity

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1. Illustration by Dola Sun. American flag with bullet holes and a crowd of people walking past.

GRIEF & RESISTANCE (EQ Paired Course Description)

How do people affectively cope with threats to life? And how do these threats effectively motivate moral and political responses? Today’s generation of college students face twin existential crises: rampant gun violence and a rapidly changing climate. While these crises can induce us to despair, our courses will examine the response of grief as a site of moral, social, and political creativity. In one course, we consider how grief in the wake of various forms of gun violence is shaped by social inequalities, but also used to motivate resistance. In the other, we explore the moral and theological resonances of our grief over deteriorating planetary systems and the inequalities produced therefrom. Ultimately, we consider how to be hopeful amidst these catastrophes.

SOCIAL RESPONSES TO AMERICAN GUN VIOLENCE (*This Course Description*)

In the sociology course, we will explore neighborhood gun violence, school (mass) shootings, and police violence as case studies to understand the experiences of grief in the wake of firearm fatalities and the opportunities for resilience, resistance, and activism. Specifically, we will consider grief sociologically – as not just a personal feeling, but an emotion experienced socially, shaped by and through social interactions, and subject to social rules and restrictions which too often reflect larger societal inequalities. Rather than wading into the specificities of political debates about root causes and policy reform, we will examine these debates as sociologists trying to understand their contours, the social issues at their core, and the ways political responses also reflect and even perpetuate social inequalities. Together, we’ll attempt to make sense of our three seemingly disparate case studies as part of a larger problem, explore the affective dimensions that shape this problem, and the way attuning ourselves to social and public emotions may help us see potential solutions.

LEARNING GOALS

Through this course, students will:

- Understand the “sociological imagination,” and be able to apply this lens to current events and political discussions about gun violence.
- Understand grief as a social emotion, and be able to explain the ways that feelings that may appear to be private and personal are actually shaped by a host of social, collective, and public identities, experiences, and social scripts.
- Think critically about the causes and consequences of social inequality, particularly in relation to American gun violence. Specifically, to understand the ways that socially constructed categories and systems reproduce patterns of violence as well as the ways that public conversations about gun violence can repeat or disrupt these patterns.
- Think critically about the three types of gun violence discussed in our case studies and relationships between them in potential causes, effects on a range of communities, affective responses, and public conversations.
- Learn how to evaluate the mission and focus of a social program or initiative as sociologists.
- Practice and improve skills in public speaking and presentation, group work and collaboration, and the creative presentation of complex academic concepts.
- See connections between sociological texts, current events and popular culture, and their own lives; and develop a personal philosophy related to grief and resistance.

LET’S GET META FOR A SECOND...

A syllabus is a story and an argument. When professors design their own syllabi, it inevitably reflects their own interests, biases, and blindspots. A course like this could be taught in dozens of different ways and using hundreds of different examples or points of focus. The way I have chosen to frame this topic, the communities and phenomena I’ve highlighted, and what has unfortunately been left out or underexplored are *choices* – and I, or a different person designing this syllabus, could have made different ones.



2. Illustration by Anson Stevens-Bollen. Hand squeezing the barrel of a gun making it ineffective.

That said, I urge you to keep your eyes and ears open when you read texts in other courses or see things in the news or popular culture that give you a different window into sociological thinking about the gun violence, grief, or activism. Bring those texts and ideas to class or share them with me over email and I'll see if there is a way to incorporate them.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- I am teaching two sections of this course this semester; this syllabus and the Canvas site are shared for both.
 - Section 01 meets M/W/F 10-10:50am in-person in Stokes Hall 286S.
 - Section 02 meets M/W/F 2-2:50pm in-person in Stokes Hall 107S
 - The Theology course directly precedes these courses in the same room.

- **Reflection Sessions** will be combined for both sections and will take place on three Wednesdays during the semester, 6-7:50pm in O’Neill 253: 9/15, 11/10, 12/1. The fourth Reflection Session will involve a choice between a field trip off campus on Saturday, October 23rd or an on-campus event on Sunday, October 24th. Please mark your calendars now and do not plan to travel on these days.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN CLASS

- **Most class sessions will involve a combination of discussions about the readings, collective activities, and mini lectures.**
- Our class meets in person. If you are sick or quarantined and will not be able to attend class in person, please email me as soon as you can so that I can make sure that we can accommodate you in class virtually.
- **In the event that we hold class virtually**, I expect you to be just as present as you are in the classroom. Email me in advance if there is a reason why you are unable to have your camera on.
- **Class Device Etiquette:** If possible, please bring your laptop or tablet to class since we will periodically do exercises that require it. You are also permitted to use your devices for note-taking and to reference readings you have done digitally – though, FWIW, research finds that you learn better when you take notes by hand.¹ **HOWEVER**, you’re not as slick as you think when you use your laptop to online shop, browse the internet, text, or do work for other classes. Likewise, I can see when you use your cell phone in your lap or on top of your laptop keyboard. It is both rude and distracting for others to use your electronic devices for things unrelated to the class and will be reflected in your participation grade.
- **Mental Health Day:** Once during the semester, you are welcome to take a Mental Health Day, no questions asked. Please let me know at least an hour before the start of class and turn in any work due that day by the following day.



COMMUNICATION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If you can’t tell from this syllabus, I am an over-communicator. Brevity is not my strong suite, but hopefully this means that clarity is. ☺ Please read my emails and Canvas messages/announcements carefully so that I don’t have to repeat myself in class and we can make the best use of our 50 minutes together each session.

- **CANVAS:** Our Canvas page will be the primary location for communication about the Class. This syllabus will likely evolve over the course of the semester, so always check Canvas for the most up-to-date reading list and assignment descriptions.

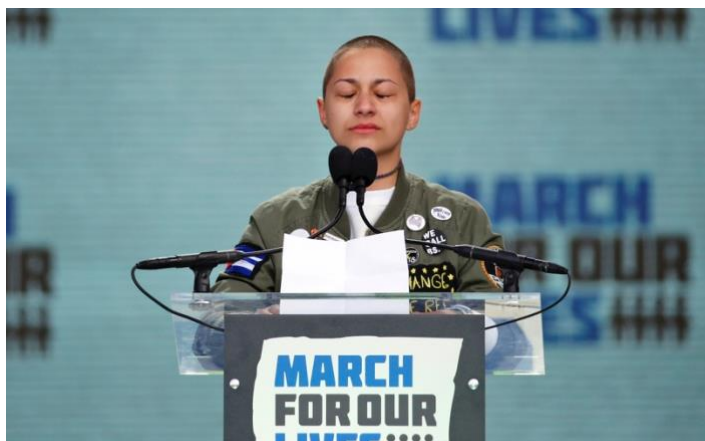
¹ If you want to check out the research about laptop use during class, here’s a good place to start:

- Sana, F., Weston, T., & Cepeda, N. J. 2013. “Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers.” *Computers & Education* 62: 24-31. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254>)
- Mueller, P. A., & Oppenheimer, D. M. 2014. “The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking.” *Psychological Science* 25(6): 1159-1168. (<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0956797614524581>)

- **EMAIL:** The best way to reach me is through email: nora.gross@bc.edu. You can generally expect a response within 24 hours on weekdays. If you don't hear from me in 48 hours, feel free to reply to the email with a gentle nudge.
 - If you have a question about the syllabus, an assignment, or some aspect of course technology, ask a peer in class first. I encourage you to create a GroupMe, Slack channel, or something else for the class for this purpose.
 - Check out [this lesson](#) in email etiquette – it is snarky, but accurate, and will serve you well, not only for emailing me, but in all your classes and future professional activities. :)
- **OFFICE HOURS:** If you want to meet with me one-on-one, or with a small group of peers, you should sign up for my office hours on Wednesdays, 11am-1pm. Go to <http://calendly.com/nora-gross/office-hours> to sign up for a 15 minute slot. When you sign up, indicate whether you plan to attend in person or virtually.
 - If you're wondering what office hours are, check out [this funny video](#).
 - If you think you need more than 15 minutes, you can't make Wednesdays, or all my slots for the week are full, email me and tell me what you'd like to meet about and your availability for the rest of the week. I'll do my best to accommodate you.
 - When it's time for your appointment, come to my office (Stokes 248S) or join my Zoom room – you will receive the link when you sign up on Calendly.

OUR EXPECTATIONS OF EACH OTHER

- **BASIC NEEDS:** First and foremost, I believe that your basic needs are more important than anything going on in class. Please reach out to me at any time if you need to talk or if there is a way I can help you connect to resources on campus. If you are facing challenges securing food, shelter, or personal safety, you should contact the office of [Student Affairs](#) and, if you are comfortable, let me know as well. Additionally, you can find a number of resources for your mental and physical health on the Canvas page: Health Services & Resources.
- **COMMON GOOD:** I know the last two years have been hard, and perhaps lonely, and all the rules and restrictions are not how you expected to end high school or begin college. But you attended Boston College, at least in part, because you believe in the school's mission of the Common Good. In this case, there is no



3. Photography by Alex Brandon, AP. Parkland survivor, Emma Gonzalez, giving a speech at the March for Our Lives rally in March 2018.

greater Common Good than keeping your peers, professors, college staff and workers, and all of their families safe. To that end, I expect everyone to be acting safely at all times and following any COVID-related guidelines from BC and Massachusetts at all times. **If you are not being safe, please don't come to class and put others at risk. Instead email me about joining us over Zoom or making another arrangement. And if masks are required in class, please oblige without needing to be reminded.**

- **BE KIND, PATIENT, DO THE BEST YOU CAN – AND EXPECT THE SAME FROM OTHERS:** Be kind to your professors, your peers, and yourself. And be patient as we all continue to adjust to new technology and new ways of interacting. This is a year like no other and I would like us all to hold the baseline assumption that we are all doing the best we can. Be okay rolling with the punches, but also don't be shy about reaching out if you are not doing okay, if you need help, or if you notice someone else is struggling. I am new to BC too so I will be learning the ropes of campus and campus resources with you, but if you have a question, ask me. If I can't answer it, then we'll go hunting for the answer together!
- **BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS' VIEWS, EXPERIENCES, AND EMOTIONS:** I will do my best to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other, and feels heard and respected, but each of you can do your part by showing respect for all worldviews and life experiences expressed in class. This doesn't mean that you can't push back on ideas you don't agree with, but we should approach each other with respect and care and focus our disagreements on differing ideas or opinions rather than others' character. Additionally, it's possible that some of the material in this course may require you to reflect on aspects of your identity or life experiences that are challenging or evoke strong emotions. If you need to take a beat to process your own feelings, that's fine. On the flip side, be respectful of others' emotions. It's never okay to police other people's feelings or tell someone how they should or shouldn't feel.
- **RAISING CONCERNS:** Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or a peer, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. If you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me or bringing it up in class, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue – perhaps an academic advisor, another faculty member, a peer, or someone on the list of resources provided on Canvas.

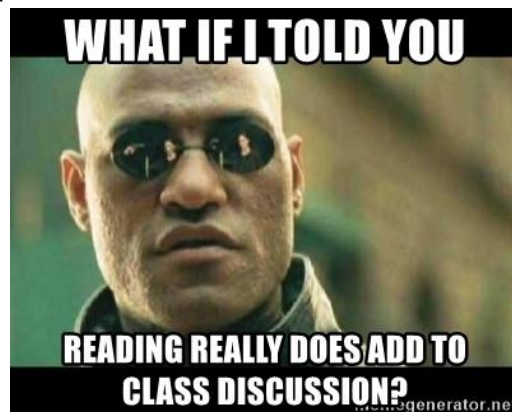


4. Photograph by Scott Olson, Getty Images. Three teenage Black girls holding signs that say, "Don't shoot. I want to grow up."

READINGS AND CLASS DISCUSSIONS

- **This is a reading heavy course – and a heavy reading course.** There will be no required course texts to purchase. All readings will be posted to Canvas and will include excerpts from academic books and journals, pieces of journalism, and occasionally chapters from textbooks that offer theoretical syntheses. I have also incorporated a number of audio-visual texts into the syllabus – so as you plan your reading for the week, keep in mind that some of the “reading” might be a podcast or a video.
- **Readings and assignments are due on the class day under which they are listed,** unless specifically noted otherwise.

- **On Fridays, I will send a reading guide for the following week’s reading** to give you a sense of what to expect from the readings, what you should be looking for or thinking about as you read, any tips for how to read effectively and/or sections that might be skimmable, as well as guiding questions.
- **This class will be heavily discussion-based.** To be prepared for the class discussions, you’ll need to do the readings! As you read, you should take notes on what stands out for you, what connections you’re seeing to other texts we’ve read or ideas we’ve discussed, and your responses to questions I will provide in the reading guide. You should be able to talk confidently about these connections as well as the main ideas of each text. This does not mean you are expected to understand everything you read the first time – some of this material is hard! So definitely also bring to class any questions or sources of confusion.
- **You’ll notice that most Fridays we will be meeting alongside the Theology course for a combined two hours.** We’ll use this time to watch several films together related to topics from both courses, and have discussions about the films. These screenings and discussions will build towards your final assignment for the joint-EQ course pair.



ASSIGNMENTS

- **There are no exams** because I do not feel that testing memorization or your ability to write timed essays are the best way to measure your learning.
- Instead, there are a combination of responses, presentations, a final research-based paper and poster, and personal reflective writing and exercises. **Details about each of the major assignments will be available on Canvas**, but below is the basic gist.

The assignments are weighted toward your final grade as follows:

Engagement (35%)	
Attendance and Participation	15%
Current Events Presentation	10%
Discussion Board Posts	10%
Written and Creative Responses (50%)	
Case Study Responses x 3	30%
Final Project	20%
EQ Joint Assignments (15%)	
Interdisciplinary Film Response	15%

ENGAGEMENT (35% of grade)

Attendance – Being on time and present in class, whether in person or virtual. As I mention above, you are allowed one mental health day during the semester. Excused absences are for urgent and documented reasons and cleared with the professor in advance or within 24 hours of a missed class.

Participation – Being prepared for and engaged in class discussions, which includes contributing your thoughts and ideas, developing comfort taking risks in discussions, referencing readings when relevant, expressing openness to new ideas, showing respect for peers’ contributions, and participating in small group conversations with peers. Participation also includes small exercises we do during or between classes, including discussion board posts and responses to your peers.

Current Events Presentation – Once during the semester, in pairs, students will do a brief (10 minutes) presentation to the class about a recent event or news story that has bearing on our conversations about gun violence. Presenters should share brief details about the event or issue and then pull out relevant themes related to grief and/or resistance. Presenters should use their sociological imagination to present the relationship between the personal troubles at play and the public issues they are connected to. Presenters are encouraged to use these presentations as an opportunity to connect course themes to their areas of personal or academic interest. Presenters are required to attend office hours (or make a separate appointment) the week before their presentation to discuss their plans.

Discussion Board Posts – There will be a handful of required discussion board posts throughout the semester in advance of guests to our class, or as preparation for particular class discussions. Additionally, students are encouraged to continue the conversations following the Current Events Presentations via the Canvas Discussion Board.

WRITTEN AND CREATIVE RESPONSES (50% of grade)

Case Study Responses – Three times during the semester, students will submit a response that synthesizes the main ideas of the case study/unit, drawing out the aspects that were most compelling, surprising, or provocative in response to a specific prompt, and highlighting their own affective response. More detailed descriptions of the expectations for each response, including word count, and deadlines will be available on Canvas.

Final Project – For the final project, students will have a choice between four options:

- 1) **Research an Anti-Violence or Grief Support Program:** Research a particular intervention, organization, or policy initiative related to gun violence, grief, or activism. In your paper, you will describe what they do, how they started, their mission, etc. Use at least three core concepts from the class to review and evaluate the program. What is their theory of change (or how do they think change happens)? Is this program responding to problems at the individual or societal level, or both? What does success look like for them? Based on what

- you’ve learned, how well do you think this program might work? 4-5 page paper.
- 2) **Develop an Anti-Violence or Grief Support Program:** Conceptualize a plan for an intervention, organization, or policy you'd like to create to prevent/reduce gun violence, respond to grief, or advance resistance efforts. What’s the mission or goal? What are the day-to-day activities of the program or effected by the policy change? How does this program respond to both individual and social problems? Use three course concepts to discuss and describe what benefits you think this program could have. 4-5 page paper.
 - 3) **Facilitate a Breakout Room at Public Film Screening Event:** A limited number of students will, for the final project, prepare for, lead, and then reflect on table conversations at the 12/3 screening of *Our Philadelphia* for the BC community. The tables will discuss the impacts of neighborhood gun violence on teenagers, schools, and communities and what more could be done to support young grievers. The goal will be to use these conversations to synthesize the learning from class related to grief, resistance, and youth activism. Each table may focus on a different theme. This project will require some group meetings to develop the plans for the tables, including some contextualizing introductory remarks (1-2 pages), discussion questions, and facilitation strategies. Following the event, table facilitators will write up detailed notes on the conversation and offer their own reflections, responses, and suggestions based on the table theme (2-3 pages plus the notes/summary).
 - 4) **Propose Your Own Research/Creative Project:** If there was a particular aspect of the course that interested you that you would like to explore further, I am open to you proposing your own final project. You may do a research project diving deeper into a particular topic and present this as a traditional paper (4-5 pages) or you may propose to present your exploration through a more creative means (podcast, short documentary, photo essay, op ed, letter to government official, etc.). This can be a paired or group project if you wish. Note: any creative project will require an accompanying "artist statement" explaining your idea and reflecting on the process (1-2 pages).

EQ JOINT ASSIGNMENTS (15% of grade)

Interdisciplinary Film Response – Throughout the semester, we will be using class on Fridays to watch films that help us better understand grief and resistance in relation to the two crises of the EQ course pair. We’ll offer guiding questions each week to help you keep track of your responses. At the end of the semester, you will write a response to the prompt: How do experiences of grief lead to practices of resistance? We’ll ask you to draw on both sociological and theological frameworks to answer the question and use films from throughout the semester to illustrate your points. A more detailed description of this progressive assignment is available on Canvas.

EXTRA CREDIT: Students can sign up to lead the class in a daily practice for the end of class to help us transition back to the rest of our day. This practice can be based in mindfulness, breathing, reflection, art, exercise, or anything else and should last about 5 minutes or less.

NOTES ABOUT GRADING

Grace period: Each student will have three days of extension for assignments. You may apply these extension days to any assignment except for group submissions or discussion board posts (which are usually timed to be relevant to a particular class session). You may also divide them up however you wish (e.g., turning in one assignment three days late or three assignments one day late each, or one assignment two days late and another assignment one day late). You do not need to ask to use your late days, but you must note on the first page of your assignment and how many late days have been used.

Disruptions: If you experience a serious personal disruption this semester that prevents you from attending class or doing your work for more than a week, please update me ASAP so that we can work out an arrangement for your assignments that is both fair and doable.

Questions about grades: If you have a question about a grade you received on an assignment, I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving the feedback before emailing me about it or requesting a meeting.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a standard of utmost importance in this class. Guidelines for academic integrity are posted on the Boston College website at: https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/academics/sites/university-catalog/policies-procedures.html#academic_integrity_policies. If you have any questions pertaining to the academic integrity guidelines or citation practices in Sociology, please talk to me *before* an assignment is due. If you are caught violating Boston College’s policies on academic integrity, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment and the appropriate Dean will be notified in accordance to the rules set forth by Boston College.

LEARNING RESOURCES & ACCOMMODATIONS

Details about tutoring, writing support, and ESL resources are available on Canvas. As a former college Writing Center tutor (and tutee), I *highly* recommend taking advantage of these resources – even if you already think of yourself as a strong writer. Information about disability and religious accommodations are also available on the same Canvas page.

**Grief & Resistance: Social Responses to American Gun Violence
WEEKLY SCHEDULE – FALL 2021**

****Course dates and assignments in purple are for the joint EQ course pair****

PART 1: SOCIOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

WEEK 1: Introductions and Enduring Questions

<p>MONDAY, Aug 30</p>	<p>Welcome & Course Introduction</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Guns and Empathy” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch the 20 minute documentary film ○ <u>Optional: read the story</u> accompanying the film • Read the class syllabus
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 1</p>	<p>Introduction to Guns and Gun Violence in America</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Social Science and the Future of Gun Research.” Jonathan Metzl, <i>Social Science Research Council</i>, 2018 • “Can new gun violence research find a path around the political stalemate.” Sheryl Gay Stolberg, <i>New York Times</i>, 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Note: You can access NYT content through a BC subscription. Part of your assignment in reading this article is to set up your BC NYT account. Follow instructions here: https://libguides.bc.edu/NYT</i> • “Seven Insights to Help You Make Sense of Gun Violence.” Jeremy Adam Smith, <i>Greater Good Magazine</i>, 2018 • “One Nation Under Fire.” ABC News (8 mins)
<p>FRIDAY, Sep 3</p> <p>JOINT CLASS</p>	<p>Introduction to Grief and Resistance and Paired Enduring Questions</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Colbert and Anderson Cooper’s conversation about grief, 2019 (10:07-21:13 – though feel free to watch the full video) • “We Call BS,” speech by Emma Gonzalez, Feb. 17, 2018 [Canvas] • <u>Optional:</u> Jonathan Metzl’s article you read for Wednesday is the intro to a series. Feel free to skim through one or more of the other articles in the series here. <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Getting to know you’ class survey (due by the end of the day Friday)

WEEK 2: Thinking Sociologically about Guns and Gun Violence

<p>MONDAY, Sep 6</p>	<p><i>No Class – Labor Day</i></p>
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 8</p>	<p>What is Sociology and the Sociological Imagination</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Sociology Experiment</i> – “Social Structure and The Individual” (pgs. 3-14 and 21-26; pgs. 15-21 are optional, but encouraged) [Canvas] • Video summarizing C. Wright Mills’ concept of the sociological imagination: “Sociological Imagination,” Sociology Live! (6 mins) • “Sociological Curiosity: Updating C. Wright Mills,” Jerry Jacobs [Canvas] <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous personal experiences class survey (by 9/8 midnight)
<p>FRIDAY, Sep 10</p>	<p>Disciplinary Perspectives on American Gun Violence</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “The Sociology of U.S. Gun Culture,” David Yamane, <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 2017 [Canvas] ▪ In addition to the reading above, please choose at least one of the texts below based on your interests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECONOMICS: “The True Cost of Gun Violence in America.” Follman, Lurie, Lee, and West, <i>Mother Jones</i>, 2015 (note: there are three short videos embedded in the article) ▪ HEALTH/MEDICINE: “The Other Victims of Gun Violence: What it’s like to be counted on to repair the bodies broken by America’s relentless gun violence.” <i>Modern Healthcare</i>, Tristram Korten ▪ EDUCATION: “Philly’s homicide crisis through a year of virtual school.” WHYY, 2021 ▪ FAMILY/PSYCHOLOGY: “What a Bullet Can Do.” Sue Repko, <i>Hazlitt</i>, 2018 ▪ Additional Optional Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “America’s Complex Relationship With Guns.” Parker, et al., <i>PEW Research Center</i>, 2017 [an in-depth look at the attitudes and experiences of US adults in relation to guns] ▪ “The Gun Show.” <i>More Perfect</i> podcast episode (72 mins) [about the history of the NRA and supreme court decisions related to guns] <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign up for current events presentations

WEEK 3: Social Construction of Race, Racial Inequality, and Gun Violence

<p>MONDAY, Sep 13</p>	<p>The Social Construction of Racial Categories and Racial Inequality</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Race in America</i> by Matthew Desmond and Mustafa Emirbayer - “A Biological Reality?” “Whiteness,” and “Race is a Social Reality,” (pgs. 18-37) [Canvas] • “What Is Whiteness?” Nell Irvin Painter, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2015 • Optional: “Science is Racist. Here’s How to Fix it.” <i>Science Rules! With Bill Nye</i>, Podcast – interview with Dorothy Roberts. (54 mins) <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a brief conversation with someone with differing opinions about the themes of the course; post your reflection on this conversation to the discussion board (due by 5pm on Sunday 9/12)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 15</p>	<p>Gun Violence as a Racial Justice Issue</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Illegible Black Death, Legible White Pain: Denied Media, Mourning, and Mobilization in an Era of ‘Post-Racial’ Gun Violence,” David Leonard, <i>Cultural Studies</i> ← → <i>Critical Methodologies</i>, 2016 [Canvas] • “Mourning Mayberry: Guns, Masculinity, and Socioeconomic Decline,” Jennifer Carlson [Canvas] • Optional: “Gun Violence is a Racial Justice Issue.” Brady
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 15, 6-7:50pm</p>	<p>REFLECTION SESSION 1: Workshop on Grief with Rick Rossi, Pastoral Counseling at Boston College</p>
<p>FRIDAY, Sep 17</p> <p>JOINT CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening 1a (SOCY): <i>Blindspotting</i> (2018)</p> <p>Optional Media (before or after watching):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: “Mahershala Ali & Rafael Casal: Envy is a Hell of a Drug.” <i>Death, Sex, and Money</i> podcast episode about <i>Blindspotting</i> (27 mins)

WEEK 4: Thinking Sociologically about Grief

<p>MONDAY, Sep 20</p>	<p>Sociological Perspectives on Death and Grief in the US</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Virtual Afterlives: Grieving the Dead in the Twenty-First Century</i>, Candi Cann, 2014 (Introduction, pgs. 1-16) [Canvas]
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Grief as a Social Emotion: Theoretical Perspectives,” Nina Jakoby, <i>Death Studies</i>, 2012 [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “The Queen of Dying.” Radiolab podcast episode about Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and the five stages of grief (64 mins) <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (beginning this week)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 22</p>	<p>The Culture of Grief and What We Do With it</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Truth about Grief: The Myth of Its Five Stages and the New Science of Loss</i>, Ruth Davis Konigsberg, 2011 (Chapter 1, pgs. 17-40) [Canvas] • “From Violation to Voice, From Pain to Protest: Healing and Transforming Unjust Loss Through the Use of Rituals and Memorials,” Carlos Torres and Alfonso M. Garcia-Hernandez in <i>Handbook of Social Justice in Loss and Grief</i> [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “Disen-whaaaaat?? Understanding Disenfranchised Grief.” Litsa Williams, <i>What’s Your Grief?</i> blog, 2013 • <u>Optional</u>: “Nancy Berns on Moving Beyond ‘Closure.’” podcast episode (52 mins)
<p>FRIDAY, Sep 24</p> <p>JOINT CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening 1b (THEO): <i>Fast Color</i> (2019)</p> <p>No readings.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post about gun violence data and the sociological imagination (due by midnight on Thursday 9/23) • Comment on at least two peers’ discussion board posts (by midnight on Saturday 9/25)

PART 2: FIRST CASE STUDY – NEIGHBORHOOD SHOOTINGS

WEEK 5: Neighborhood Shootings or Street Violence

<p>MONDAY, Sep 27</p>	<p>Gun Violence in Urban Neighborhoods</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence – and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets</i>, Thomas Abt, 2019 (Chapter 2) [Canvas] • “Unequal Burdens of Loss: Examining the Frequency and Timing of Homicide Deaths Experienced by Young Black Men Across the Life Course,” Jocelyn Smith Lee, 2015 [Canvas]
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Optional</u>: “Gun Violence,” chapter in <i>Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women That the Movement Forgot</i> by Mikki Kendall [Canvas] [makes the case for gun violence as a feminist issue] • <u>Optional</u>: “Intersections of Injustice,” <i>The Philadelphia Inquirer</i>, 2021 [about the relationship between redlining and present day violence] • <u>Optional</u>: “A gun was stolen from a small shop in Wisconsin. Officials have linked it to 27 shootings in Chicago.” <i>Chicago Tribune</i>, 2021 [about the role of illegal guns in inner city shootings] <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Sep 29</p>	<p>The Social Organization of Violence and the Role of Respect</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Street Codes – Code of the Street.” Elijah Anderson [6 min video] • <i>Living the Drama: Community, Conflict, and Culture Among Inner-City Boys</i>, David Harding, 2010 (Chapter 2) [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “Structural vulnerability to narcotics-driven firearm violence: an ethnographic and epidemiological study of Philadelphia’s Puerto Rican inner-city,” Friedman, et al, 2019 (focus on pg. 7-18) [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “Made of Honor.” <i>Hidden Brain</i> podcast, 2021 (52 mins) [introduces the idea of honor culture and the importance of respect] • <u>Optional</u>: “Code of the Tweet: Urban Gang Violence in the Social Media Age,” Forrest Stuart, <i>Social Problems</i>, 2020 [Canvas]
<p>FRIDAY, Oct 1</p> <p>COMBINED CLASS</p>	<p>Film Discussion 1</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Joint) film writing towards the final reflection

WEEK 6: Ripple Effects of a Shooting

<p>MONDAY, Oct 4</p>	<p>Wide Impacts of a Shooting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Harper High School,” <i>This American Life</i> podcast - Part 1 (57 mins) • Choose one of these articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Wounded: Life after the Shooting,” Jooyoung Lee, 2012 [Canvas] ○ “High Stakes in the Classroom, High Stakes on the Street: The Effects of Community Violence on Students’ Standardized Test Performance,” Sharkey, Schwartz, Ellen, & Lacoce, 2014 [Canvas] ○ “When the Management of Grief Becomes Everyday Life: The Aftermath of Murder,” Sarah Goodrum, 2008 [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “Take Note: Dr. Tashel Bordere on Suffocated Grief.” WPSU Penn State Radio, 28 mins
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GROSS – “GRIEF & RESISTANCE” SAMPLE SYLLABUS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Optional</u>: TED Talk by Jooyoung Lee: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXSq0Q1odNI <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Oct 6</p>	<p>Racialized Experiences of Grief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Harper High School,” <i>This American Life</i> podcast - Part 2 (62 mins) • Choose one article: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Announcement Shock and Psychic Numbing," Daniel Martin, 2013 [Canvas] ○ “Becoming Aggrieved: An Alternative Framework of Care in Chicago,” Laurence Ralph, 2015 [Canvas] ○ “Disenfranchised Grief Following African American Homicide Loss: An Inductive Case Study,” Piazza-Bonin, et al, 2015 [Canvas] • <u>Optional</u>: “Death as Resistance.” <i>Grief Out Loud</i> podcast (43 mins) – <i>take note especially of the section on RIP t-shirts beginning at 29:30 when Dr. Fletcher is talking about her nephew’s death</i>
<p>FRIDAY, Oct 8</p> <p>COMBINED CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening 2a: “Our Philadelphia” and “Club With No Name” (2020)</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “#LongLiveDaGuys: Online Grief, Solidarity, and Emotional Freedom for Black Teenage Boys after the Gun Deaths of Friends,” Nora Gross (unpublished article) [Canvas] • “Philadelphia mom who lost her son to gun violence opens a candy shop in his honor.” ABC News <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board reflection in response to the film(s)

WEEK 7: What’s Working and Wellness Check

<p>MONDAY, Oct 11</p>	<p>NO CLASS - Indigenous People’s Day and Marathon Monday</p>
<p>TUESDAY, Oct 12</p>	<p>Wellness Check and Approaches to Solutions</p> <p><i>No reading for today. Rest, reflect, and take care of yourself!</i></p> <p><i>Also, you are encouraged to get started on your case study response if you have not already!</i></p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing)

<p>WEDNESDAY, Oct 13</p>	<p>Approaches to Solutions</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jigsaw of readings about solutions; students will select their readings on Friday, October 8th in class
<p>FRIDAY, Oct 15</p> <p>COMBINED CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening 2b: <i>Last Call for the Bayou</i> (2012)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First case study response (due 10/18 midnight)

PART 3: CASE STUDY: MASS SHOOTINGS

WEEK 8: Mass Shooting Survivors, Grief, and Resistance

<p>MONDAY, Oct 18</p>	<p>School Shootings and Survivors</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Daily episode about Parkland survivors • <i>PARKLAND: Birth of a Movement</i>, David Cullen (Chapters 1-3) [Canvas] • <u>Optional:</u> <i>PARKLAND SPEAKS: Survivors from Marjory Stoneman Douglas Share Their Stories</i>, Sarah Lerner (Ed.), 2019 (excerpts) [Canvas] <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing) • Case Study 1 Response Paper (due by midnight 10/18)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Oct 20</p>	<p>Collective Grief into Grievance</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Between Grief and Grievance, a New Sense of Justice,” Judith Butler [Canvas] • <u>Optional:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How Many More (7 minute documentary) ○ Embedded: Capital Gazette (4-part podcast series), NPR, 2021 ○ “Public mourning: Displays of grief and grievance,” Jack Santino, 2020 in <i>Exploring Grief: Towards a Sociology of Sorrow</i> edited by Jacobson & Peterson [Canvas]
<p>FRIDAY, Oct 22</p>	<p>NO CLASS</p> <p>Assignment:</p>

GROSS – “GRIEF & RESISTANCE” SAMPLE SYLLABUS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film (and play) reflection to help you with final joint writing assignment (due 10/29)
SUNDAY, Oct 24	<p>REFLECTION SESSION 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend <u>“Oil,”</u> a BC Theatre Department production followed by a talkback on Sun 10/24 at 2pm at Robsham Theater Arts Center

WEEK 9: Roots of Mass Shootings

MONDAY, Oct 25	<p>Shooters and (White) Masculinity</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Mass Shootings and Masculinity,” Tristan Bridges and Tara Leigh Tober [Canvas] “Masculinity, aggrieved entitlement, and violence: considering the Isla Vista mass shooting,” Vito, Admire, & Hughes, 2017 [Canvas] <u>Optional:</u> <u>“Don’t blame mental illness for mass shootings: blame men.”</u> Laura Kiesel, <i>Politico</i>, 2018 <u>Optional:</u> <u>“Why Are White Men Stockpiling Guns.”</u> Jeremy Adam Smith, <i>Scientific American Blog</i>, 2018 <u>Optional:</u> <u>“American Male.”</u> MTV short film (6 mins) <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current events presentations (ongoing)
WEDNESDAY, Oct 27	<p>Mental Illness and Other Contributing Factors</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Would improvements in mental health care reduce mass shootings?” in <i>Thinking Critically: Mass Shootings</i>, Andrea Nakaya, 2015 [Canvas] “Mental Illness, Mass Shootings, and the Politics of American Firearms,” Metzl & MacLeish, <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 2015 [Canvas] <u>Select one additional reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Will stricter gun control reduce mass shootings?” in <i>Thinking Critically: Mass Shootings</i>, Andrea Nakaya, 2015 [Canvas] “Do violent video games cause mass shootings?” in <i>Thinking Critically: Mass Shootings</i>, Andrea Nakaya, 2015 [Canvas] <u>“Hollywood and Gun Violence.”</u> Abraar Karan
FRIDAY, Oct 29 JOINT CLASS	<p>In Class Film Screening 3a: <i>First Reformed</i> (2018)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select one of the four options for the final project (10/30)

WEEK 10: Responding to Mass Shootings

<p>MONDAY, Nov 1</p>	<p>Youth Activism and Making Connections</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PARKLAND: Birth of a Movement</i>, Dave Cullen, 2019 (Chapter 7 and 14) [Canvas] • “The world is listening to Parkland teens. Some Philly kids wonder: Why not us?” Kristen Graham, <i>The Philadelphia Inquirer</i>, 2018 • “The nation is focused on students and gun violence. But kids in urban schools want to know, where’s everybody been?” <i>The Washington Post</i> <p><i>Extra office hours this week to discuss final project ideas</i></p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Nov 3</p>	<p>Solving Mass Shootings</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Violence Project</i>, Peterson & Densley, 2021 (Chapter 9) [Canvas] • CNN video report on lockdown drills (6 mins) • “School Shooting Lockdown Drills Usefulness Subject of Debate.” <i>The Conversation</i>, 2019
<p>FRIDAY, Nov 5</p> <p>COMBINED CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening 3b: <i>Armor of Light</i> (2015)</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bullets into Bells: Poets and Citizens Respond to Gun Violence</i>, Clements, Teague, & Rader (Eds) (“Jordan” poem and response) [Canvas] <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study 2 response (due 11/8)

PART 4: CASE STUDY: STATE VIOLENCE

WEEK 11: Race, the State, and Power

<p>MONDAY, Nov 8</p>	<p>Hate Crimes, Identity-Based Violence, Intersectionality</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Stand Your Ground.” Last Week Tonight with John Oliver, 2021 (29 mins) • Choose one of these two articles:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "White Terrorism is as Old as America," Britt Bennett, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2015 ○ "What This Wave of Anti-Asian Violence Reveals about America." Anne Cheng, <i>New York Times</i>, 2021 • Take at least one Implicit Bias Social Attitudes Test. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Go to this website: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/. Feel free to create a log-in or just take the test as a guest. Take either the Race IAT or the Weapons IAT. It should take about 10 mins. <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study 2 response (due 11/8 midnight)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Nov 10</p>	<p>Police-Involved Shootings and Intersectionality</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Urgency of Intersectionality" – TED Talk by Kimberlé Crenshaw, 2016 (18 mins) • "Do African Americans Have the Right to Bear Arms?" David Graham, <i>The Atlantic</i>, 2017 • "Police, Power, and the Specter of Guns." Champe Barton, <i>The Trace</i>, 2020 <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "20-20 Hindsight." <i>On Our Watch</i> podcast (52 mins): ○ "Why Do So Many Traffic Stops Go Wrong?" <i>NY Times The Daily</i> podcast (26 mins) ○ "The Disproportionate Risks of Driving While Black," Sharon LaFraniere and Andrew W. Lehren ○ "Police killings: the price of being disabled and black in America." David Perry, <i>The Guardian</i>, 2017 ○ "The NRA Supported Gun Control When the Black Panthers Had the Weapons." Thad Morgan, 2018 <p>Current events presentations (ongoing)</p>
<p>WEDNESDAY, Nov 10 6-7:50pm</p>	<p>REFLECTION SESSION 3: Visit from Jim Antal, author of <i>Climate Church, Climate World</i></p>
<p>FRIDAY, Nov 12</p> <p>COMBINED CLASS</p>	<p>Film Discussion 3</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final project topic proposal (due 11/15) • (Joint) film writing towards the final reflection (due 11/17)

WEEK 12: Grief and Activism in the Wake of Racial and State Violence

<p>MONDAY, Nov 15</p>	<p>Collective Grief and Public Mourning</p> <p>Readings and Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Disenfranchised Grief and Families’ Experiences of Death After Police Contact in the United States,” Baker, Norris, and Cherneva, 2021 • “The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning.” Claudia Rankine, 2015 (you can also listen to the article at the same link, 26 mins) • <u>Optional:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Mourning in America: Race and the Politics of Loss</i>, David McIvor, 2016 (Afterward: Black Lives Matter and the Democratic Work of Mourning) ○ “Collective Grief.” <i>Grief Out Loud</i> podcast (42 mins) <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current events presentations (ongoing)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Nov 17</p>	<p>Resistance and the Black Lives Matter Movement</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Making All Black Lives Matter</i>, Barbara Ransby (Intro) • “#IfTheyGunnedMeDown: the double consciousness of Black youth in response to oppressive media,” Nora Gross, <i>Souls</i>, 2017
<p>FRIDAY, Nov 19</p> <p>JOINT CLASS</p>	<p>In Class Film Screening: <i>A Love Song for Latasha</i> (2019) & Guests: Red Rebels, Extinction Rebellion</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study 3 response (due 11/21) • Peer Review of Final Project Plans (in class 11/22)

PART 5: SYNTHESIS AND SOLUTIONS

WEEK 13: Final Project Check-Ins

<p>MONDAY, Nov 22</p>	<p>Peer Review of Final Project Plans and Office Hours</p>	<p><i>Optional Assignment:</i> Submit revised final project plans for feedback (by 11/24)</p>
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Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 14: Where Do We Go From Here?

<p>MONDAY, Nov 29</p>	<p>Semester Review and Synthesis</p> <p><i>Come to class with 2-3 of your major take-aways from the semester. Spend a bit of time reviewing your notes, skimming your favorite readings, or reading back through the papers you wrote (perhaps you already did this in preparation for Case Study 3?). What did you learn about how to think sociologically? What did you discover that surprised you about gun violence, grief, or resistance? Was there a particular week, lesson, reading that really impacted you? Everyone should be prepared to share at least once during class as we walk through what we did this semester.</i></p>
<p>WEDNESDAY, Dec 1</p>	<p>Power and How Things Change</p> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Can Power from Below Change the World?" Frances Fox Piven, 2007 [Canvas] • "Can Self-Defense Laws Stand Up to a Country Awash in Guns?" NYTimes article from Nov. 15th about the simultaneous trials of Kyle Rittenhouse and McMichael/McMichael/Bryan (for the death of Ahmaud Arbery)
<p>WEDNESDAY, Dec 1 6-7:50pm</p>	<p>REFLECTION SESSION 4: Joint Wrap-Up Discussion</p>
<p>FRIDAY, Dec 3 **Special Afternoon Class** (Required)</p>	<p><i>Regular class sessions canceled</i></p> <p>Instead: afternoon public film screening of <i>Our Philadelphia</i> with filmmaker guests and participation from select students</p> <p>3-5pm, Devlin 08</p>

WEEK 15: Wrap-Up

<p>MONDAY, DEC 6</p>	<p>Final Projects Discussion</p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint reflection paper about films (due 12/6) • Be prepared to informally present the big ideas from your final project
<p>WEDNESDAY, DEC 8</p>	<p>Final Projects Discussion Continued & Course Wrap-Up</p>

Final project due: December 15th at midnight