

Martyrdom

SCTR 112



Course Description:

This course interrogates ancient and contemporary discourses on martyrdom in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Crucial questions to explore include: What is martyrdom and its relationship to ancient notions of a noble death? Why are notions of martyrdom so prevalent among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim fundamentalist groups today? How is the Torah, The Bible, and the Quran used to legitimate violence against the self and others? And, who counts as a Martyr and who does not? These questions intersect with various contemporary religious and political concerns including: religious violence, imperialism, colonialism, apocalyptic groups (e.g. Jonestown Branch Davidians), fundamentalism (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim), suicide bombings, church and school Shootings, and the rise of ISIS. In the last part of the course, students will also reflect on the multiplicity of ways in which martyrdom discourses have shaped their religious formation and spiritualities.

INSTRUCTOR: Roberto Mata

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OFFICE HOURS: TBD

OFFICE : (300j)

CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES :

Students taking this course will:

- 1.1** Describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several traditions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions. (Students will fulfill this core objective through group presentations, worship site visits, as well as through midterm and final examinations).

- 1.2** Use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence. (Students will fulfill this core objective through an introduction to the theories and methods from the study of religion, class discussions, reading responses, and both midterm and final exams).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Introduce the origins, development, and impact of notions of martyrdom in the Abrahamic traditions.
2. Explore the influence of martyrdom discourses on the American religious traditions, politics, and culture.
3. Provide theoretical tools and methods from the academic study of religion to help students interpret the various discourses on martyrdom as well as contemporary occurrences.
4. Help students engage global dialogues about the ways in which martyrdom intersects with imperialism, fundamentalism, migration, genocide, colonialism, slavery, apocalyptic war, and religious violence.
5. Challenge students to reflect on the influence of martyrdom discourses on their own spiritualities, traditions, and experiences.
6. Encourage students to map the implications of martyrdom discourses for interreligious dialogue and the common good.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

W.H.C Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in The Early Church*, James Clarke & Company Ltd, 2008.

David Cook. *Martyrdom in Islam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Droge, Arthur J., and James D. Tabor. *A Noble Death: Suicide and Martyrdom Among Christians and Jews in Antiquity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.

John Hinnells (ed), *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*. Routledge Religion Companions. 2, revised, annotated ed. Routledge, 2009.

Additional reading material will be posted on Camino Course Site. There you should also find other course related materials including: reading response questions, field education experience response, drop boxes, online discussions, exam study guides, rubrics and other handouts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESMENT METHODS:

- **Class Participation (15%).** Students will achieve 15% of their course grade through: (1) on-time attendance; (2) preparation (i.e. completion of readings assignments or discussion questions); and (3) thoughtful participation in course activities (e.g. small and large group discussions, and online discussions, and site visits. **[Fulfills core curriculum objective**

1.1. Students will describe and compare various representations of Martyrdom in the sacred texts of Jews, Muslims, and Christians].

- **Reading Responses (20%)** Students are required to post weekly reading responses (**1-2page each**) on Camino throughout the quarter. Each response must engage an issue/theme/question in the readings from the students' social location. **[Fulfills core curriculum objective 1.2. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs, religious experiences, or faith journeys through reading responses, as well as through class and online discussions.]**
- **Mid-term Examination (25%):** An essay that explores a relevant theme, issue, or practice of interest in the contemporary context, and that engages the question of martyrdom in one or all of three religious traditions (**10 pages**). The essay must engage the interpretive approach of at least one major thinker from the academic study of religion. **[Fulfills core curriculum objective 1.1. and 1.2. The midterm exam challenges students to identify, describe and interpret the role of martyrdom within sacred texts, contemporary issues, and religious practices. Students must also articulate the ways in which their social location impinges on their interpretative process.]**
- **Group Presentations (15%):** In class, multi-media group presentation on a contemporary issue or problem related to martyrdom in ancient or contemporary contexts. **[Fulfills core curriculum objective 1.1. This collaborative effort entails both description and comparison of Martyrdom themes within three distinct religious traditions, as well as serious engagement with the theory and methods from the study of religion.**
- **Final Examination (25):** Students will write a **15-page paper** requiring description and comparison of select martyrdom accounts and its implications for interreligious dialogue and the common good. The paper must employ analytical frameworks from the study of religion and engage contemporary issues/problems related to the politics of martyrdom and its intersection with other topics (e.g. Religious Violence, Colonialism, Fundamentalism, Terrorism, and Apocalypticism). Students must also reflect on the ways in which their socio-religious location shaped their approach to the paper. **[Fulfills core curriculum objective 1.1. and 1.2. Students also employ critical tools to reflect on their own faith journeys and to articulate constructive solutions to the issues they identify.]**

GRADING SCALE:

94%-100%	A	80%-82%	B-	67%-69%	D+
90%-93%	A-	77%-79%	C+	63%-66%	D
87%-89%	B+	73%-76%	C	60%-62%	D-
83%-86%	B	70%-72%	C-	59% & below	F

The instructor will provide written feedback on reading responses, readings responses, and presentations. Group project feedback will be communicated via email or during office hours.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Disability Accommodation Policy

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in The Drahmman Center in Kenna 101, (408) 554-4318; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must provide documentation of a disability to Disability Resources prior to receiving accommodations.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination (Title IX)

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife/about/osl.cfm and click on the link for the University's [Gender- Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie, at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethics point: www.ethicspoint.com or <http://stage-www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethics-point>

Academic Integrity Policy

The University is committed to academic excellence and integrity. Students are expected to do their own work and to cite any sources they use. A student who is guilty of a dishonest act in an examination, paper, or other work required for a course, or who assists others in such an act, may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a grade of F for the course. In addition, a student found guilty of a dishonest act may be subject to sanctions up to and including dismissal from the University as a result of the student judicial process as described in the Community Handbook. A student who violates copyright laws, including those covering the copying of software programs, or who knowingly alters official academic records from this or any other institution is subject to similar disciplinary action. For more information on the university's policy on academic integrity see:

[http://www.scu.edu/provost/policies/upload/Academic%20Integrity %20Protocol.pdf](http://www.scu.edu/provost/policies/upload/Academic%20Integrity%20Protocol.pdf)

PEDAGOGY:

To create a collaborative, democratic, and empowering learning environment, this course will implement a form of Border Pedagogy. Such a pedagogical approach acknowledges the shifting borders of power and knowledge, and links the educational enterprise with the struggle for a more just and democratic society. The instructor's version of this approach entails five interrelated

stages: Critical Awakening, Journeying, Crossing, Negotiating, and Transforming. Such an approach will translate into the following practical dimensions of our learning practices/experiences: (1) students and the instructor will reflect on their own socio-religious location and the ways it shapes their understanding of the three monotheistic religions; (2) students will collaborate with one another and engage in critical and constructive dialogue for class projects and discussions; (3) students will identify and address key issues/themes/ ritual practices in the three religious traditions; (4) students will learn traditional and non-traditional paradigms for understanding religion, as well as methods of interpretation; (5) students will be prepared to articulate the implications of course content and methodologies for the struggle towards a more egalitarian society.

Week & Date	LECTURE TOPICS and READING ASSIGNMENTS
Wk. 1 April 3, 5, 7	PART I. "What is Martyrdom?" Origins, Definitions, and Early Debates
<p>Please read the primary sources marked in Red and ONE of the required readings for each class meeting.</p> <p>Required Readings (SELECT ONE of the required readings for each class session):</p> <p>Monday: The Politics of Dying for God (Introduction). No reading due</p> <p>Wednesday: Defining Martyrdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revelation 2:13 Daniel Boyarin, "Whose Martyrdom is This, Anyway," 93-126. Hussein Cicek, Martyrdom in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (PDF), George Moyser, "Religion and Politics," (TRCSR), 445. <p>Friday: Theorizing Martyrdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabeth Castelli, "Performing Persecution, Theorizing Martyrdom," 32-68. Michelle Foucault, "The Body of The Condemned," in <i>Discipline and Punishment</i>, 3-31. <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Cook. <i>Martyrdom in Islam</i>, 1-12. G.W. Bowersock, <i>Martyrdom and Rome</i> (1995), 6-23. Avemarie, Friedrich, and Jan Willem van Henten. <i>Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Antiquity</i>. Routledge, 2002. Candida Moss, <i>Ancient Christian Martyrdom</i>, 1-16. 	
Wk. 2	Martyrdom in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Apr 10,12,14

Required Readings:

Monday: Jewish Martyrs and a Noble Death

- Maccabees Chs. 6-7, Daniel 6
- Gerson Cohen, "Hannah and Her Seven Sons in Hebrew Literature," in idem, *Studies in the Variety of Rabbinic Cultures*, 39-60.

Wednesday: Early Christian Martyrs

- Revelation 2:12-17; **The Martyrdom of Polycarp**
- Leonard L. Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games." *The Journal of Religion* 82, no. 1 (2002).
- Michelle Foucault, "The Spectacle of the Scaffold," in *Discipline and Punishment*, 32-72.

Friday: Martyrdom in Islam

- Surah 3:169-170
- Keith Lewinstein, "The Revaluation of Martyrdom in Early Islam" in *Sacrificing the Self*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 78- 91.

Recommended Readings:

- Friedrich Avemarie, and Jan Willem van Henten. *Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Antiquity*. Routledge, 2005
- David Cook, Developing Martyrology in Islam (PDF).
- Smith, *Fools, Martyrs, Traitors*, 3-20.

Wk. 3
Apr 17, 19, 21

**Part II. Who can become a Martyr?
Qualifications, Justifications, and Benefits**

Required:

Monday: Justification for Martyrdom

- 4 Maccabees Chs. 5-18
- Tessa Rajak, "Dying for the Law: The Martyr's Portrait in Jewish-Greek Literature," in M.J. Edwards and Simon Swain, eds., *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire*, 39-67.
- Judith Perkins, "Death as a Happy Ending," in the *Suffering Self*, 1-15.

Wednesday: Voluntary Martyrdom

- *The Martyrdom of Perpetua & Felicitas*; Origen's *Exhortatio ad Martyrium*, Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* Book 4;
- Candida R. Moss, "The Discourse of Voluntary Martyrdom: Ancient and Modern," *Church History* 81:1 (September 2012), 531-551.

Friday: Rewards of the Martyr

- Surah 2:154
- David Cook, "Legal Definitions, Boundaries, and Rewards of the Martyr" (Martyrdom and Islam), 31-35.

Recommended Readings:

- Asma Afsaruddin, *Striving in the Path of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 95-115.
- David Frankfurter, "Martyrdom and the Prurient Gaze," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17:2 (2009), 215-245.
- Shmuel Shepkaru, "From after Death to Afterlife: Martyrdom and Its Recompense," *AJS Review* 24:1 (1999), 1-44.

Wk. 4:
Apr 24, 26, 28

**Remembering the Martyrs:
The Politics of Commemoration**

Required:**Monday: Writing Martyrdom**

- Chaviva Levin, "Constructing Memories of Martyrdom: Contrasting Portrayals of Martyrdom in The Hebrew Narratives of the First and Second Crusade," in Nicholas Paul and Suzanne Yeager eds., *Remembering the Crusades* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 50-68.
- David Tracy, "Writing," in *Critical Terms in the Study of Religion*, 383-394.

Wednesday: Remembering the Martyrdom of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- Luke 22:19
- Castelli, Collective Memory and the Meaning of the Past, (Martyrdom and Memory), 10-30.
- Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (London: Thomas Nelson Press, 2015), 1997-221.

Friday: Commemorating Palestinian Women Martyrs

- Surah 3:139-40
- Rajan, V G Julie. *Women Suicide Bombers: Narratives of Violence* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2011), 1-38.
- David Cook, Martyrdom and Islam, 74-97.

Recommended:

- Michael Van Dyke, *Radical Integrity: The Story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour Pub., 2001.
- Cragin, Kim, and Sara a Daly. *Women as Terrorists: Mothers, Recruiters, and Martyrs*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger Security International, 2009.
- Laleh Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration (Volume 27 of Cambridge Middle East Studies*. Cambridge University Press, 2007), 65-88.

Wk. 5:
May 1, 3, 5

Martyrdom and Mysticism

Required

Monday: Contemplative Death

- Lawrence Fine, "Contemplative Death in the Jewish Mystical Tradition," in *Sacrificing the Self*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 92-106.
- *Richard King, "Mysticism and Spirituality" in TRCSR, 223-239.*

Wednesday: The Blood of Martyrs

- Acts 6
- Julia A. Lamm, "Mysticism in the Pre-Nicene Era?" in the Blackwell Companion to Christian Mysticism, 133-146.

Friday: Sufi Martyrs

- David Cook, "Sectarian Islam: Sunni, Shiite, and Sufi Martyrdom," in *Martyrdom and Islam*, 45-74.
- Carl W. Ernst, From Hagiography to Martyrology: Conflicting Testimonies to a Sufi Martyr of the Delhi Sultanate" in *History of Religions*. Vol. 24 (1985): 308-327.

Recommended:

- Soltes, *Mysticism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, 73-105.
- Massignon, Louis, and Herbert Mason. *The Passion of Al-Hallaj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- King, Ursula. *Christian Mystics: Their Lives and Legacies Throughout the Ages*. Mahwah, N.J.: Hidden Spring, 2001.

Wk. 6:
Apr. 8, 10, 12

PART III. Political Martyrdom: Colonialism, State Repression, and Civil War

Required

Monday: Palestinian Anti-Colonial Struggles

- Lotte Buch Segal, "The Grammar of Suffering in Occupied Palestine," in *No Place for Grief*, 26-47.
- Tamir Sorek, "Calendars, Martyrs, and Palestinian Particularism under British Rule," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 43, (2013): 6-23.
- *Frantz Fanon, "On Violence" in The Wretched of the Earth, 1-50.*

Wednesday: Martyrs in The Third Reich

- Marc H. Ellis, "Weisel: Holocaust Martyrdom and the 1967 War" in *Encountering the Jewish Future* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 34-53.
- *Judith Perkins, "Saints' Lives: The Community of Sufferers," in the Suffering Self, 200-215.*

Friday: The Jesuit Martyrs (Romero and Grande)

- Ana María Pineda. *Romero & Grande: Companions on the Journey (Selections)*.
- Jon Sobrino, *Witnesses to the Kingdom: The Martyrs of El Salvador and the Crucified Peoples* (Orbis Books, 2015), 119-130.

Recommended:

- Lotte Buch Segal, *No Place for Grief: Martyrs, Prisoners, and Mourning in Contemporary Palestine*. 2016.
- Peterson, Anna Lisa. *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion: Progressive Catholicism in El Salvador's Civil War*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.

Wk. 7:

May 15, 17, 19

**Racialized Martyrdom:
Cases from The Civil Rights Movement**

Required

Monday: Jewish “Freedom” Martyrs

- Don Mitchell, “Andrew Goodman” and “Michael Schwerner” in *The Freedom Summer Murders*. 2014.
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/06/mississippi-civil-rights-killings-goodman-chaney-schwerner/487907/>

Wednesday: Martyr Luther King

- Martin Luther King, “I have been to the Mountain Top”
- Naveh, Eyal J. “Decline and Resurrection of the Martyr” in *Crown of Thorns: Political Martyrdom in America From Abraham Lincoln to Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: New York University Press, 1990), 167-192.
- Frantz Fanon, “The Lived Experience of the Black Man” in *Black Skins/White Masks* (PDF).

Friday: Malcom X

- Robert Terrill, *The Cambridge Companion to Malcolm X* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 171-184.
- J.W. Douglass, "The Murder and Martyrdom of Malcolm X." *The Assassinations. Probe Magazine on JFK, MLK, RFK and Malcolm X*. Los Angeles: Feral House (2003): 376-424.

Recommended

- Les Bayless, “The Three Who gave their Lives: Remembering the Martyrs of Mississippi Freedom Summer,” in *People’s Weekly World*, 25 (1964): PDF.
- Meyer, Philip. "Aftermath of Martyrdom: Negro Militancy and Martin Luther King." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1969): 160-173.
- E. Fuller Torrey, *The Martyrdom of Abolitionist Charles Torrey*, 144-167.

Wk. 8:

Part IV. Martyrdom and Religious Intolerance

May 22, 24, 26

Mosque, Church, and School Shootings

Required:

Monday: Synagogue Shootings

- Stuart Wexler, *America's Secret Jihad: The Hidden History of Religious Terrorism in the United States* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2015), 25-48.
- Clara S Lewis, *Tough on Hate? The Cultural Politics of Hate Crimes*, 23-45/.

Wednesday: Columbine & The Emmanuel AME Church

- Castelli, "Cassie Bernall of Columbine High and the American Legacy of Early Christian Martyrdom" in *Martyrdom and Memory*, 172-197.
- Lebrun, Marcel. *Books, Blackboards, and Bullets: School Shootings and Violence in America*. (Lanham: MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009), 17-33.

Friday: Mosque Shootings

- Nicoletta Karam, *The 9/11 Backlash: A Decade of U.S. Hate Crimes Targeting the Innocent*. Berkeley, Calif.: Beatitude Press, 2012.

Recommended:

- Justin Watson, *The Martyrs of Columbine: Faith and the Politics of Tragedy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 9-160.
- Scott Hoffman, "'Last Night I prayed to Matthew....' Matthew Shepard, Homosexuality, and Popular Martyrdom in Contemporary America," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 21:1 (Winter 2011), 121-164.
- Daniel Brown, "Martyrdom in Sunni Revivalist Thought," in *Sacrificing the Self*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 107-117.

Week 9:

**May 29, 30-
June 2**

**Part V. Martyrdom and The Common Good:
Fundamentalism, "Terrorism," and Jihad**

Required:

Monday: Jewish Fundamentalism

- *Between Terrorism and Civil War: The Al-Aqsa Intifada (Contemporary Security Studies in* (Edited by Clive Jones, Ami Pedahzur and Associate Professor of Government Ami Pedahzur. Routledge, 2013),
- Inbari, Motti. *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount Who Will Build the Third Temple?* Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2009.
- Munson, "Fundamentalism," in *TRCSR*, 354-371.

Wednesday: Christian Fundamentalism

- Husam Mohammad, "Protestant Evangelicals and U.S. Policy Towards Israel." In *End of Days: Essays on the Apocalypse from Antiquity to Modernity* (McFarland & Company, 2009), 221-241.

Friday: Martyrdom and Jihad

- John R. Hall, "Radical Islam and the Globalized Apocalypse," in *Apocalypse: From Antiquity to the Empire of Modernity* (Oxford: Wiley, 2013), 161-189.
- Nance, Malcolm W, and Richard Engel. *Defeating ISIS: Who They Are, How They Fight, What They Believe*, 371-405.

Recommended:

- William Faizi. *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State*, St. Martin's Press, 2015.
- Abū 'Amr, Ziyād. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza: Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- New, *Holy War: The Rise of Militant Christian, Jewish, and Islamic Fundamentalism*, 16-23.
- Ted Galen Carpenter, "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (2013): 1-11.
- Michael Barkun, "Racist Apocalypse: Millennialism on the Far Right." *American Studies* 31, no. 2 (1990): doi:10.2307/40642392.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40642392>.

Wk. 10:
June 5,7, 9

Martyrdom & Interreligious Dialogue

Required:

Monday: Martyrdom or Suicide?

- Lankford, Adam. *The Myth of Martyrdom: What Really Drives Suicide Bombers, Rampage Shooters, and Other Self-destructive Killers* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1-21.

Wednesday: Martyrdom and Interreligious Dialogue

- C. Cornille, "Christian-Muslim Dialogue," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, 244-260.
- C. Cornille, "The Jewish-Christian Dialogue," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, 205-223.
- C. Cornille, The Muslim-Jewish, in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, 224-243.

Friday: "The Pluralistic Hypothesis"

- John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 227-240.
- Michael Barnes, *Religious Pluralism*, in (TRCSR), 426-442.

Recommended:

- Hedges, "Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue," 58-109;
- Gilman, "Collaboration and Conflict," 35-55.
- Liepert, *finding a Path to Peace Our Faiths Can Share*. 157-175.

Wk. 11:

FINAL EXAMS WEEK

