



Middlebury

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Dear Alumni College Students:

I am very excited that you'll be joining me at Bread Loaf this September for my class *Dissecting the Radical Right*. At the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) in Monterey, California, I teach a course to graduate students that focuses on the broad challenges related to the activities of the radical right. I am adapting materials from that course, including the incorporation of new lectures, that I hope you'll find interesting. Of course, given that we'll only be spending time with each other for a few days, how we "dissect the radical right" will be quite different from the experience you'd have with me if you were taking my course in Monterey, California. We will, by necessity, cut to the core essence of the challenges that pertain to right-wing extremism. Nonetheless, I think you'll learn a lot and we'll have a great time in the classroom.

As I write to you, I am still thinking about what I watched last night, the first hearing of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol. While this course will examine more than one act of domestic terrorism, we cannot deny that the dark shadow of the insurrection will continue to shape how we think about and discuss right-wing extremism. We are going to not only examine the radical right in the United States but also look at the transnational nature of the movement. As we do, we will try to answer the question regarding how interconnected the U.S. radical right is with international counterparts. How does the far right communicate, and over which propaganda platforms are messaging and recruitment happening? How does the radical right finance its activities? These are but a few of the many questions and topics we will explore as we dissect the radical right. The material we will look at and talk about will be difficult—know this going into the class.

In the spirit of symmetry, before you arrive at Bread Loaf, I would like you to read one book and one academic monograph, listen to one podcast, and watch one documentary. First, I would like to you read Kathleen Belew's *Bring the War Home*. Second, I would like you to read the monograph I wrote with Colin Clarke, titled "From Paramilitaries to Parliamentarians: Disaggregating Radical Right-Wing Extremist Movements." You can find the article at https://www.resolvenet.org/system/files/2021-12/RSVE_REMVE_BlazakisClarke_December%202021.pdf. Third, I would like you to listen to a short 24-minute podcast on memes and chan culture. You can find the podcast at <https://rightrising.fireside.fm/episode19>. Finally, I would like you to watch PBS's *American Insurrection*: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/american-insurrection/>.

I look forward to seeing you this fall.

Sincerely,

Jason M. Blazakis
Professor of Practice at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies
Director of the Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism