

Conflict 601 -- Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution -- George Mason University
Fall 2014 -- Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10

Professor Susan F. Hirsch
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Office: S-CAR, Metropolitan Bldg. 5th Fl.
Office hrs: Weds. 3-4 or by appointment

Course Objectives

CONF 601 is designed to explore a wide range of conceptual frameworks for analyzing and resolving social conflict. The objectives include:

- Examining and critiquing social theories that may prove useful in analyzing various types of social conflict;
- Evaluating the usefulness of these social theories by applying them to specific conflict situations;
- Assisting students to become better critics of conflict-related theories and more acute conflict analysts; and
- Enabling students to develop their own abilities to construct useful theories of conflict and conflict resolution.

Course Materials

Plan to read all of the required reading materials. The instructor will facilitate discussions in class based on the assumption that all students have read and reflected on all the required reading. These readings are meant to present core approaches in conflict analysis and resolution and the foundational social theory that underpins CAR and related fields. Many readings may offer arguments that you have strong reactions to, whether positive or negative. That is intentional in the class design. In addition, students are encouraged to follow and critically examine media reports on current events related to social conflict, for they will be discussed in class to supplement the assigned reading materials.

The following required book has been ordered through the Bookstore on the Arlington campus. It is also widely available in libraries.

Avruch, Kevin. 2013. *Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution: Culture, Identity, Power, and Practice*. Boulder: Paradigm Press.

Other required readings will be available on our Blackboard site or through the web. For those students desiring additional background reading, a reader in basic social theory titled *Social Theory: Roots and Branches* by Peter Kivisto will be on 2 hour reserve at Burton Library and the Arlington campus library. There are also readings marked “additional readings” on the syllabus; these are not required, but students who wish to gain more background knowledge are encouraged to read them.

Course Requirements

In order to receive a passing grade, it is necessary to attend classes and to come to class prepared to discuss the week's reading. As part of participation, pairs of students will lead a 45-minute discussion of a reading once during the term. Participation in class will count for a significant portion of the final grade. Other assignments will include a take-home essay exam at midterm; a book review; and a final take-home examination. The breakdown of the grade is as follows:

Participation: 20%
Midterm exam: 30%
Book review: 10%
Final exam: 40%

Assignments turned in late will be graded down, unless the student furnishes written documentation of the medical or family emergency which made timely completion of the work impossible. Please note that it is S-CAR policy to refuse to grant grades of Incomplete for reasons other than documented medical or family emergencies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at oai.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial plagiarism-detection services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), please ask for guidance and clarification.

GMU E-MAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their Mason email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information. You should check your email for important course, S-CAR, and Mason information.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

LIBRARY SERVICES

The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution library liaison is Mary Oberlies (moberlie@gmu.edu). Do not hesitate to contact her with specific questions about databases and library research strategies.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring and other support services to non-native English speaking students. For more information visit the ELI's website at: <https://eli.gmu.edu/about/eli-support-services/>

THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For more information, visit the Writing Center's website at: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

(703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

S-CAR hosts a variety of activities during the semester, such as films, talks, seminars, and social events. You are encouraged to attend these and to offer reflections on them in class and/or on our Blackboard site. Welcome!

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Aug. 27

Introduction

Discussion: Explaining the Violence in Ferguson
Introduction to the Course

Sept. 3

Realism

Required Reading:

Morgenthau, Hans, J. "A Realist Theory of International Politics." *Politics among nations: the struggle for power and peace* (McGraw Higher Education, 2006), pp. 3-16.

Waltz, Daniel. "Structural Realism after the Cold War" *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), pp. 5-41.

Drezner, Daniel. "Why Obama is Arming Syria's Rebels: It's the Realism Stupid," June 14, 2013. Available at:
http://drezner.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/06/14/why_obama_is_arming_syrias_rebels_its_the_realism_stupid

Additional Reading:

Robert McNamara, "Fog of War" (film)

Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, "From Realism to Neorealism and Neoclassical Realist Theory"

Sept. 10

Basic Human Needs, Frustration-Aggression, Relative Deprivation

Required Reading:

Gurr, "Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence"

Burton, "Needs Theory"

Richard Rubenstein, "Basic Human Needs: Steps Toward Further Theory Development," www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol6_1/Rubenstein.htm

Burton, John. "Where Do We Go From Here?"
http://www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol6_1/Burton4.htm

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research*. 1969.

Additional Reading:

Reimann, "'All You *Need* is Love'...And What About *Gender*?"

Avruch and Black, "A Generic Theory of Conflict Resolution: A Critique"

Sept. 17 **Culture and Meaning**

Required Reading:

Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In: *The Interpretation of Cultures*. (Basic 1977).

Avruch, Kevin, 2012. *Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution: Culture, Identity, Power and Practice*. NY: Paradigm Publishers. (Chapter 1-3, pp. 3-55, Chapter 6, pp. 81-95).

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Merry, Sally 2003. "Human Rights Law and the Demonization of Culture (And Anthropology Along the Way)." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 26:1: 55-77

Additional Reading:

Said, "The Clash of Definitions"

Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, 1993.
<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/19930601faessay5188/samuel---p---huntington/the---clash---of---civilizations.html>

Sept. 24 **Psychological Approaches**

Required Reading:

Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death"

Fassin, "The Reversing of the Truth" and "The Psychtraumatology of Exile" in *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Brunner, "Criticizing Collective Trauma"

<http://www.agpolpsy.de/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/brunner-2011-criticizing-collective-trauma.pdf>

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

James, Erica 2004. "The Political Economy of 'Trauma' in Haiti in the Democratic Era of Insecurity." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 28(2):127-149.

Additional Reading:

Volkan, Selections from *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*

Freud, Selections from *A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud*

Kelman, "A Social-Psychological Approach to Conflict Analysis and Resolution."

Oct. 1 Identity and Intersectionality

Required Reading:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Verso, 2006), Ch. 1, 2.

Louis Kriesberg and Bruce W. Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*, 4th ed. (Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), pp. 49-59.

Avruch, 51-63

Butler, "Precarious Life, Grievable Life." From: *From Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (Verso, 2009).

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Hirsch, "Civilians Under the Law: Inequality, Universalisms, and Intersectionality as Intervention." In *Civilians and the Ideology of War*. Edited by Daniel Rothbart, Karina V. Korostelina and Mohammed Cherkaoui. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Additional Reading:

Korostelina, "Social Identity as Social Phenomenon and Scientific Concept" In *Social Identity and Conflict*. (Palgrave, 2007).

Oct. 8 Theories of Cooperation

Required Reading:

Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (Basic, 2006), chapters 1-4.

Sapolsky, "A Natural History of Peace." In *Foreign Affairs*. Jan/Feb, 2006.

Russell Hardin, *Trust* (Polity 2006), chapters 1-4.

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Korac, "Gender, Conflict, and Social Capital: Bonding and Bridging in War in the former Yugoslavia" in Cox, Michaelene (ed.) *Social Capital and Peace-Building: Creating and Resolving Conflict with Trust and Social Networks*. London: Routledge. pp. 107-121, 2008.

<http://roar.uel.ac.uk/667/1/Korac,%20M%20%282008%29%20Social%20Capital%20pp%20107-21.pdf>

Additional Reading:

Frans de Waal, *Peacemaking Among Primates* (Harvard 1989), chapters 1-2.

Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, "Microcosmic Theories of Violent Conflict"

Douglas, *Beyond War: The Human Potential for Peace* (Oxford 2007).

MIDTERM DUE ON Tuesday, Oct. 14 by email to shirsch4@gmu.edu

Oct. 15 Power/Knowledge

Required Reading:

Foucault, Selections from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Knopf, 1979. and *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France 1978-79*. New York: Picador, 2009.

Avruch, 141-183

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29:1, 2003.

Oct. 22 Globalization and Political Economy

Required Reading:

David Keen, "Incentives and Disincentives for Violence," in Mats Berdal and Davjd M. Malone, eds., *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War* (Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 19-41.

Mark Duffield, "Globalization, Transborder Trade, and War Economics," Mats Berdal and Davjd M. Malone, eds., *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War* (Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 69-89.

Karen Ballentine and Heiko Nitzschke, *The Political Economy of Civil War and Conflict Transformation*, available at http://www.berghofhandbook.net/articles/BHDS3_BallentineNitzschke230305.pdf

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Severine Autesserre, 2009. "Hobbes and the Congo—Frames, Local Violence, and International Intervention (2003-2006)," *International Organization* 63(2): 249-280.

Additional Reading:

Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy"

Oct. 29 **Revolutions and Social Movements**

Required Reading:

Tilly, "Claims as Performances" and "Invention of the Social Movement." From *Contentious Performances*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Haugerud, "The Comedy of Wealth" and "Irony, Humor, Spectacle" in *No Billionaire Left Behind: Satirical Activism in America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013.

For Student-Facilitated Discussion:

Roy, Beth, John Burdick, and Louis Kriesberg, 2010. "A Conversation Between Conflict Resolution and Social Movement Scholars." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 27(4): 347-368.

Additional Reading:

Tarrow, Selections from *Power in Movement*

Nov. 5 **Students' Choice**

For this week, students will choose ONE of the following books to read. We will spend the first hour of class in "book club discussion" where students will share ideas with those who chose the same book. Students will then report back to the group about the main ideas of the book and the key questions it raises for conflict

analysis and resolution. For next week, students will write individual reviews of their chosen book.

The books to choose from are:

1. Richmond, Oliver 2011. *A Post-Liberal Peace*. New York: Routledge.
2. Theidon, Kimberly 2012. *Intimate Enemies: Violence and Reconciliation in Peru*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
3. Coulter, Chris. 2009. *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives through War and Peace in Sierra Leone*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
4. Burnet, Jennie. 2012. *Genocide Lives in Us: Women, Memory, and Silence in Rwanda*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
5. Khalili, Laleh. 2013. *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
6. Polletta, Francesca. 2006. *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
7. Goldstein, Daniel. 2012. *Outlawed: Between Security and Rights in a Bolivian City*. Duke: Duke University Press.

Book Review DUE Monday, Nov. 10 by email to shirsch4@gmu.edu

Nov. 12 Critical Reflective Practice

Required Reading:

Cole, Teju. 2012. "The White Savior Industrial Complex." *The Atlantic*, March 21, 2012. Available at:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

Ní Aoláin, Fionnuala. 2009. "Women, Security and the Patriarchy of Internationalized Transitional Justice." *Human Right Quarterly* 31:1055-1085.

Richmond, Oliver. 2011. "Critical agency, resistance and a post-colonial civil society." *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(4):419-440.

In-Class Film Screening:

"The Black Highway" (2014, Directors Leslie Dwyer and Dag Yngvesson)

Nov. 19 **Narrative**

Required Reading:

Cobb, Sara 2013. *Speaking of Violence: The Politics and Poetics of Narrative in Conflict Resolution*. New York: Oxford University Press. Introduction and Chapter 1.

John Winslade and Gerald Monk, 2000, *Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Read Chapter 1, "Narrative Mediation: What is It?" and Chapter 2, "Theoretical and Philosophical Issues in Narrative Mediation."

For Discussion:

Dwyer, Leslie 2009. "A politics of silences: violence, memory and treacherous speech in post-1965 Bali." In Alex Hinton and Kevin O'Neill, eds., *Genocide, Truth, Memory and Representation: Anthropological Approaches*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Nov. 26 **Thanksgiving Break**

Dec. 3 **Conflict Resolution and Social Change**

Required Readings:

Mitchell, Christopher, 2006. "Conflict, Social Change and Conflict Resolution: An Enquiry. Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 5. Available at: http://www.berghofhandbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_mitchell_lead-1.pdf

Jabri, Vivienne, 2006. "Revisiting Change and Conflict: On Underlying Assumptions and the De-Politicization of Conflict Resolution." Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 5 Available at: http://www.berghofhandbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_jabri_comm.pdf

Mitchell, Christopher, 2006. "Conflict Analysis, Conflict Resolution and "Politics." Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 5. Available at: http://www.berghofhandbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_mitchell_res_p.pdf

FINAL EXAM DUE ON DEC. 10 BY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION TO SHIRSCH4@GMU.EDU. PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF YOUR EXAM IN CASE OF EMAIL DIFFICULTIES.