

CONF 601 Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution
Spring 2006

Section 001: Tatsushi Arai, Wednesday, 7:20-10:00 pm, Truland Building, 666A

Section 002: Richard Rubenstein, Thursday, 4:30-7:10 pm, Truland Building, 666A

Objectives

Welcome to CONF 601! This course is designed to explore a wide range of conceptual frameworks for analyzing and resolving social conflict. Our objectives include:

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

Instructors and Office Hours

This course is taught by Tatsushi Arai (Section 001, Wednesday, 7:20-10:00 pm, Truland Building Room 666A) and Richard Rubenstein (Section 002, Thursday, 4:30-7:10 pm, Truland Building Room 666A). Professor Arai can be reached at 301-699-0714 (home phone, 9:00 am – 9:00 pm only) or tarai@gmu.edu. Professor Rubenstein can be reached at 703-993-1307 or rrubenst@gmu.edu. Both are available by appointment.

Graded Exercises and Related Matters

Grades in this course will be based on three exercises: two short take-home examinations (25% of grade each) and a final examination or term paper (50%). Students have the option to submit a term paper in lieu of sitting for the final examination, but the topic for the final paper must be approved by the instructor by Week 12 (April 19-20) at the latest. So start planning early if you prefer to write a term paper.

In order to receive a passing grade, it is necessary to attend classes prepared to discuss the week's reading. Late examinations or papers will be graded down one full grade for each day or part of a day that the paper is late, 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 ICAR policy to refuse to grant grades of Incomplete for reasons other than documented medical or family emergencies. (For more information about grading, please look at the statement on academic standards in the ICAR Handbook and GMU's Honor Code.)

Course Materials

Most of the articles and book chapters will be placed on GMU's electronic reserves. To access e-reserve reading, go to: <http://oscr.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi> When the page opens, select the course # and section for the course, the faculty name, and the password as listed below:

Tatsushi Arai – 601.001 – Password: *Theory*

Richard Rubenstein – 601.002 – Password: *Theory*

Some of the reading materials, especially for Weeks 2 and 3, are available on two-hour reserves at ICAR's Burton Library. Two sets of the reading materials have been prepared and will be shared by sections 001 and 002. The Burton Library hours are: noon to 9 pm from Monday through Thursday. Please *do not take them away from the Arlington campus* and be sure to *return them within two hours*. The honor code applies. For more information about how to locate reading materials, please refer to the Course Schedule section that follows.

There are two categories of reading materials, required reading and further reading. Required reading materials are *mandatory*. The instructors will facilitate discussions in class based on the assumption that all students have read and reflected on all the required reading. Further reading materials are *optional* yet useful for students to deepen their understanding of the particular subjects under study. In addition, students are encouraged to follow and critically examine daily news on current events related to social conflict, for they will be discussed in class to supplement the assigned reading materials.

Course Structure

In broad outline, three types of social theories will be studied in this course:

1. *Theories of human nature* – viewing each individual as a unit of analysis; accounting for “what is inside you,” with an emphasis on what lies beneath the person's consciousness;
2. *Theories of structure* – viewing a social institution, typically comprised of

sustained, hierarchical, and multi-layered human relationships, as a unit of analysis; accounting for “what you are inside of”.

3. *Theories of culture* – viewing an epistemological system of meaning-making as a unit of analysis; accounting for “what is inside you,” with an emphasis on shared interpretive lenses with which to understand social phenomena.

These three types are loose categories that overlap significantly. They are suggested for the limited purpose of offering a bird’s eye perspective on the course structure and its contents. Type 1 (human nature) theories include basic human needs (week 3), aggression (week 4), and psychoanalysis (week 5); type 2 (structural) theories include realism and functionalism (week 2), Marx (week 9), and modernization and globalization (week 10); and type 3 (cultural) theories include meaning-making (week 6) and some aspects of the session focusing on alternative starting points for theory-building (week 12).

In order to help students appreciate the practical usefulness, or lack thereof, of these and other types of social theory, we will incorporate three case study sessions (weeks 5, 8, and 13) in this course. These sessions will enable the students to pause for a moment in the midst of intensive reading, reflect expansively and deeply on the theoretical insights they have learned from the readings, and examine the strengths and weaknesses of each theory in the practical context of a social conflict at hand from a comparative, theoretical perspective.

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 25, Wednesday (Section 001 Arai) and January 26, Thursday (Section 002 Rubenstein)

Introduction to the course

This session will offer an overview of the course and explore why we need to study social theory for conflict analysis and resolution. No reading is assigned.

Week 2: February 1 (Arai) and February 2 (Rubenstein)

Realism and functionalism

Required reading (both items available on two-hour reserves at Burton Library.):

- Hans J. Morgenthau. 1967. Chapter 1: A Realist Theory of International Politics, Chapter 3: Political Power, and Chapter 11: The Balance of Power. *Politics among Nations*. pp. 3-14, 26-35, and 161-171, respectively.
- Lewis A. Coser. 1956. Chapters 2, 3, and 4. *The Functions of Social Conflict*. pp. 33-85.

Further reading (both available on two-hour reserves at Burton Library):

- James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. 2001. Chapter 2: From Realist to Neorealist and Neoclassical Realist Theory. *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, 5th edition. pp. 63-103. (This book is also available on the Arlington library's two-hour reserve.)
- Samuel P. Huntington. 1993. The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*. Summer, vol. 72. (Application of the realist paradigm in conflict analysis).

Week 3: February 8 (Arai) and February 9 (Rubenstein)

Basic human needs

Required reading (all three items available on two-hour reserves at Burton Library):

- Abraham Maslow. 1987. Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5. *Motivation and Personality*. pp. 3-45, 56-62.
- John Burton. 1979. Chapter 3: Institutional Values and Human Needs. *Deviance, Terrorism, and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems*. pp. 55-84
- John Burton. 1989. Chapter 3: Human Needs Versus Societal Needs. *Human Needs in World Society*. pp. 34-57. (This chapter is adopted from *Deviance, Terrorism, and War*.)

Further reading:

- Johan Galtung. 1991. International Development in Human Need Perspective. *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*. Edited by John Burton. pp. 301-335. (Note: Galtung rejects Maslow's thesis on the hierarchy of needs. Also read other chapters in this volume. Galtung's chapter available on Burton Library's two-hour reserve)

Week 4: February 15 (Arai) and February 16 (Rubenstein)

Aggression and relative deprivation

Required reading (all available via e-reserve):

- James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. 2001. Chapter 7: Microcosmic Theories of Violent Conflict. *Contending Theories of International Relations*, 5th ed. pp. 231-263.
- Ted R. Gurr. 1970. Chapter 2: Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence. *Why Men Rebel*. pp. 22-58.
- James C. Davies. 1972. Chapter 4: Toward a Theory of Revolution. In *Anger, Violence and Politics*, edited by I.K. Feierabend, R.L. Feierabend and T. R. Gurr. pp. 67-84. (This essay offers useful case studies of the author's thesis, analogous to Gurr's.)

Week 5: February 22 (Arai) and February 23 (Rubenstein)

Case analysis (review of weeks 2 to 4)

There is no reading assigned for this week. Review all the notes you have taken so far, the underlined parts of the texts you have read, and the annotations you might have made in the margins. Catch up with parts of the required reading you might have missed and study selected further reading that may interest you. Be ready to summarize the central thesis of each theory and explore how it may apply in your practice of conflict analysis and resolution. Complete these tasks *before* you come to the session.

A case study will be prepared and placed on the e-reserve at least one week prior to this session. Be ready to apply each of the theories learned in weeks 2 to 4 in the analysis and resolution of the conflict described in the scenario. Then ask such questions as: (1) How useful is each theory for explaining why the conflict emerged and grew in a way it did?, (2) How helpful is the theory in your attempt to explore possible ways to resolve the conflict?, and (3) What similarities and differences do you find between alternative theoretical approaches to conflict analysis and resolution? There is no need to submit your answers to these and other questions in writing. But be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

Week 6: March 1 (Arai) and March 2 (Rubenstein)

Psychoanalysis

Required reading:

- Sigmund Freud. 1955. Psychoanalysis. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychoanalytical Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XVIII (1920-22). pp. 235-254. (Available via e-reserve.)
- Sigmund Freud. 1964. Why War? *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychoanalytical Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XXII (1932-36). pp. 197-215. (Note: Correspondence between Einstein and Freud in 1932. Available via e-reserve.)
- Vamik Volkan. 1997. Chapter 1: Ethnic Tents: Descriptions of Large-Group Identities, Chapter 3: Chosen Trauma: Unresolved Mourning, and Chapter 5: We-ness: Identifications and Shared Reservoirs. *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. pp. 19-29, 36-49, and 81-100. (Available on Burton Library's two-hour reserves. The whole volume is available on the Arlington library's two-hour reserve.)

Further reading:

- Stephen A. Mitchell and Margaret J. Black. 1995. *Freud and Beyond: A History of*

Modern Psychoanalytic Thought. (Note: Especially Chapter 1: Sigmund Freud and the Classical Psychoanalytic Tradition, pp. 1-22. Also read other chapters of your interest to explore how Western psychoanalysis has evolved from Freud and beyond. Chapter 1 is available on e-reserve and the whole volume is available on the Arlington library's two-hour reserve.)

- Herbert Marcuse. 1966. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. (Especially Chapters 1 to 4, pp. 11-105, available at Burton Library. The whole volume is available on the Arlington library's two-hour reserve.)
- Vamik Volkan. 2004. *Blind Trust: Large Groups and Their Leaders in Times of Crisis and Terror*. (Especially Part One: Large-Group Psychology, pp. 23-109 for the author's most recent effort to theorize group psychoanalysis. Part One is available at Burton Library.)

Week 7: March 8 (Arai) and March 9 (Rubenstein)

FIRST EXAM DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS.

Mid-term course evaluation.

Meaning-making (including culture, worldview, and civilization)

Required reading:

- Mary Clark. 1989. Chapter 8: On Acquiring a Worldview. *Adriadne's Thread: The Search for New Modes of Thinking*. pp. 213-242. (Available via e-reserve.)
- Johan Galtung. 1996. Part IV: Civilization Theory (Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 only). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. pp. 196-240 and 250-264 only. (The selected sections are available at Burton Library. The whole volume is available on the Arlington library's two-hour reserve.)
- Kevin Avruch and Peter W. Black. 1991. The Culture Question and Conflict Resolution. *Peace and Change*, 16 (1): 22-45. (Available via e-reserve.)

Further reading:

- Ann L. Stoler. 1989. Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in Twentieth-Century Colonial Cultures. *American Ethnologist*, 16 (4): 634-660. (Available via e-reserve.)

Spring Break (March 12 – 19) – No class.

Week 8: March 22 (Arai) and March 23 (Rubenstein)

FIRST EXAM DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS SESSION.

Film – Battle of Algiers (in lieu of a case study)

See the instructions for Week 5. Be prepared to discuss how the theories studied so far, particularly in Weeks 6 and 7, may apply in the analysis and resolution of the conflict(s)

described in the film.

Week 9: March 29 (Arai) and March 30 (Rubenstein)

Marx and class struggle

Required reading:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1994. The German Ideology, Part I (selections). *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*. Edited by L. H. Simon. pp. 102-156. (Available via e-reserve.)
- David McLellan. 1975. Chapter 2: The Thought and Chapter 3: The Reputation. *Karl Marx*. pp. 19-93. (Available at Burton Library.)
- Richard E. Rubenstein. 1993. Analyzing and Resolving Class Conflict. *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*. Edited by D.J.D Sandole and H. van der Merve. pp. 146-157. (Available via e-reserve.)

Week 10: April 5 (Arai) and April 6 (Rubenstein)

Modernization and globalization

Required reading:

- C.E. Black. 1966. Chapter 1: Modernization. *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History*. pp. 1-34. (Available via e-reserve.)
- Thomas L. Friedman. 2005. Chapter One: While I Was Sleeping and Chapter Twelve: The Dell Theory of Conflict Prevention – Old-Time Versus Just-in-Time. *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. pp. 3-47, 414-438. (Available at Burton Library.)

Further reading:

- William Outhwaite. 1995. *Habermas: A Critical Introduction*. (More on modernization theory. See, for example, Introduction and Chapters 1, 7, and 8, in pp. 1-19, 109-136, available at Burton Library.)
- Harry Magdoff. 1978. *Imperialism: From the Colonial Age to the Present*. (One version of globalization theory worth studying. Especially Chapter 3: Imperialism: A Historical Survey and Chapter 6: The Multinational Corporation and Development – A Contradiction?, in pp. 94-113, 165-197. These selected chapters are available at Burton Library.)
- Barber R. Barber. 1992. Jihad Vs. McWorld. *The Atlantic Monthly*, 269 (3), March. pp. 53-65. (Perhaps one of the most popularized theses on globalization. Available at the “e-journal finder” on the GMU library website. An expanded version of the author’s argument is found in his 1995 publication *Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism’s Challenge to Democracy*, 1995.)
- Jan A. Scholte. 2000. *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*. (A comprehensive

overview of issues, trends, and debates, centering on the author's thesis that the essence of globalization is supra-territoriality. The book is available at the Arlington library.)

SECOND EXAM DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS

Week 11: April 12 (Arai) and April 13 (Rubenstein)

Postmodernism

Required reading:

- Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgewick. 1999. Postmodernism. *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*. pp. 294-298. (Note: Available via e-reserve. Postmodernism is an umbrella term, and it encompasses a broad range of theoretical claims. Read this encyclopedia article first and gain an overview of the concept. Then read Foucault's work and evaluate it as one way of applying postmodernism in the analysis of conflict-related phenomena.)
- Michel Foucault. 1979. Chapters titled "The Body of the Condemned" and "Illegality and Delinquency". *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. pp. 3-31, 257-292. (Available at Burton Library.)

Week 12: April 19 (Arai) and April 20 (Rubenstein)

In search of alternative starting points for theory-building

Most reading materials for this course are derived from contemporary Western epistemological traditions. In this session, we will explore alternative epistemological starting points for theory-building, asking questions like: What if CONF 601 were to be taught in a completely different epistemological and geographic context?; What would this syllabus look like if ICAR had emerged as an epistemic community based in Baghdad, Hanoi, Durban, or elsewhere? The point of asking these counterfactual questions is to critically reflect on the underlying assumptions from which the theoretical knowledge learned in this course has historically evolved. Through this exercise, we will explore alternative approaches to conceptualizing social conflict and conflict resolution.

Required reading (all available via e-reserve):

- Mohammed Abu-Nimer. 2000-2001. A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam. *The Journal of Law and Religion*. vol. 15, no. 1 & 2. 217-265.
- Nomonde Masina. 2000. Xhosa Practices of *Ubuntu* for South Africa. *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts*. Edited by I.W. Zartman. pp. 169-181.
- Johan Galtung. 1988. Peace and Buddhism: An Evaluation of Strong and Weak

Points. *Transarmament and the Cold War: Peace Research and the Peace Movement*. (Essays in Peace Research, vol. 6). pp. 369-380 (and 430-433 for endnotes).

None of these essays was written for articulating a well-integrated theory of conflict or conflict resolution. Therefore they should not be read as social theories per se, unlike all the other readings assigned for this course. Instead use each of these essays as a source of inspiration and explore (and speculate, if necessary) how people born and raised in these traditions may account for possible sources of social conflict, as well as for ways in which social conflict should be resolved. Apply lessons learned in Week 7 (Meaning-making) as additional sources of inspiration. If comparison helps, pick any of the theories studied so far (say, realism, Marxism, or Freudian psychoanalysis) and compare it with each of the three perspectives in search of evocative similarities and differences. Exercise deep empathy and imaginative creativity. Be ready to present “Islamic, Ubuntu, and Buddhist theories” of social conflict and/or conflict resolution in class.

Week 13: April 26 (Arai) and April 27 (Rubenstein)

Case analysis (review of weeks 9 to 12)

See the instructions for Week 5

SECOND EXAM DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS SESSION

Week 14: May 3 (Arai) and May 4 (Rubenstein)

Conclusion: Theory of theory-building

Further reading (optional, not required; available via e-reserve):

- Johan Galtung. 1977. On the Theory of Theory Construction. *Methodology and Ideology: Essays in Methodology*, vol. 1. pp. 190-212 (and 265-268 for endnotes)

This session will provide 360-degree reflections on the course. Exercises include: (1) mapping the theories of conflict from a bird’s eye perspective and identifying different types of theories, (2) offering a brief overview of important theories left out of this course, (3) understanding similarities and differences between theories of conflict analysis and theories of conflict resolution, and (4) envisioning what new theories are needed and what they might look like. Bring your questions to the class for discussion.

FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS (WEEK 14)

**FINAL EXAM DUE AT THE INSTRUCTORS' MAILBOXES AT ICAR
BY 4:30 PM ON MAY 11 (THURSDAY)
FOR BOTH SESSIONS 001 AND 002.**