

**CONF 729:  
APPROACHES TO VIOLENCE**

Fall 2005 (Section 001)  
Thursday, 1:30-4:10 pm, ARLTB 666A  
Professor Kevin Avruch; *Tel.*: 993-3607; *e-mail*: kavruch@gmu.edu  
Office Hours: **ICAR**: Truland Bldg., Arlington Campus, Rm. 604. By  
appointment

**Course Description**

This course is designed as an opportunity in a seminar setting to explore *violence* from a variety of intellectual and political perspectives. Readings will be wide-ranging and interdisciplinary in nature, addressing levels of analysis from the individual and psychological to the nation-state, and emphasizing an acquaintanceship with some classics in the field. The role of violence in conflict resolution is also considered. The assigned readings in the course (as listed below and in the course program) will form the basis for class discussions throughout the term, but all students will be required to choose a topic for their research paper early on and read appropriately on this topic outside class for the paper (more on this below).

**Course Requirements**

**Required Readings:**

John Darby, *The Effects of Violence on Peace Processes*

Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*

Richard Rhodes, *Why They Kill: The Discoveries of a Maverick Criminologist*

Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*

Manfred Steger and Nancy Lind, eds., *Violence and its Alternatives*

Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*

The main requirement for the class is a research paper on some aspect of violence, from any of the perspectives covered in class--or one that we did not consider. I want the paper to reflect your own research and/or practice interests and therefore I am open to a wide range of topics. You should discuss your topic with me as early as possible, but no later than Week 7 (10/13). The paper is due at the last class session, December 8, 2004.

## Course Program

- Week 1 (9/1): Course Orientation
- Week 2 (9/8): Conceptualizing Violence: Philosophers (& Others) Weigh In  
Read in Steger & Lind: Arendt, Wolff, Coady, Galtung
- Week 3 (9/15): Making Violence...  
Read Rhodes, pp. 5-174
- Week 4 (9/22) ...And Violent Individuals  
Read Rhodes, pp. 175-323
- Week 5 (9/19): Gender and Violence  
Read in Steger & Lind: Hartsock, Alder, Renzetti, Dworkin, Jenesky and Seifert
- Week 6 (10/6): Race and Violence  
Read in Steger & Lind: Fanon, Malcolm X, Nicholson, West, Marable and Barsh
- Week 7 (10/13): Narratives of Violence-I: The Body  
Read Feldman, pp. 1-146  
*Paper topic paragraph due*
- Week 8 (10/20): Narratives of Violence-II: Political Terror  
Read Feldman, pp. 147-269
- Week 9 (10/27): Violence as Politics & Ritual-I: Varieties of Violence  
Read Tilly, pp. 1-129
- Week 10 (11/3): Violence as Politics & Ritual-II: Causes and Consequences  
Read Tilly, pp. 130-238
- Week 11 (11/10): Mass Violence: Holocaust and Genocide-I  
Read Staub, pp. 3-150
- Week 12 (11/17): Holocaust and Genocide-II  
Read Staub, pp. 151-283
- Week 13 (11/24): No Class: Thanksgiving
- Week 14 (12/1): Violence and Conflict Resolution-I: Peace Processes  
Read Darby, pp. 4-126
- Week 15 (12/8): Violence and Conflict Resolution-II: Alternatives  
Read in Steger & Lind: Gandhi, MLK, Sharp, and Turpin & Kurtz.  
*Research/Term paper due.*