

The American University
School of International Service
International Peace and Conflict Resolution Program

Theories of Violence and War

SIS-610-00

Fall 2011, Thursdays, 5:30PM – 8:00PM

Professor: Adina Friedman, PhD

E-mail: afriedma@american.edu

Telephone: 703-725-2926

Office: EQB 309

Office Hours: Tuesday 1PM-2PM; Friday 1:30PM-2:30PM

Course Summary: This course sets forth the main theoretical frameworks, with empirical examples, for understanding the causes and conditions of violent conflict. It examines organized violence at various levels (global system, state, group, and individual) and across disciplines (political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and more). By the end of the course you should know the main approaches to understanding what violence is and why warfare and violence occur. You should also be able apply those approaches to concrete cases, as well as to identify lacunae in the existing theories.

IPCR has set out the course outcomes/learning objectives as follows:

Knowledge

- Understanding of the importance of a strong theoretical foundation in the fields of peace studies and conflict resolution in that resolving conflict and building peace require understanding why mass organized violence occurs.
- Knowledge of the range of main theories and key questions explaining violence and war, and how they are related to each other.
- Awareness of the implications for practice of adopting various theoretical positions.
- Familiarity with various levels of analysis for studying violence and war: the global system, the state or regime, social or ethnic group, and individual.
- Familiarity with various disciplinary approaches to the study of conflict, violence, and war, notably those of political science, anthropology, sociology, economics, and psychology.
- Familiarity with feminist perspectives on the study of conflict, violence, and war.

Skills

- Ability to think theoretically and critically about warfare and mass political violence.
- Ability to look at conflict, violence, and war from multiple perspectives.

Attitudes (Values)

- Respect for different disciplinary traditions in addressing violence and war.

Course Assignments and Grading:

Your course grade will be based on the following elements:

Reading Presentation (20%): Each student will choose a class reading. On the reading's due date, you will give a 10-15 minute presentation in class in which you will: 1) **summarize** the reading's main points 2) **discuss** the perspective (personal, disciplinary) from which it was written 3) **critique** it 4) **connect** it to other course readings and discussions (does it contradict, complement, enhance, etc any of the other readings/ideas?), and 5) **raise some questions** for further thought and discussion. You should bring a short written version of your presentation to hand to me in class (you can also email it ahead of class).

Midterm Exam (30%): The exam will include several essay questions, in which you will be required to synthesize course themes and/or reflect upon them.

Final Exam (40%): The exam will include several essay questions, in which you will be required to synthesize course themes and/or reflect upon them.

Participation (10%): This includes class attendance, participation in classroom discussions, and completion of in-class written assignments. Please email the professor if you know you must miss class. Attendance is mandatory. If you know you must miss class please email me ahead of time. More than three absences may result in a low and/or failing grade.

- Please be sure to turn off cell phones during class
- Laptops should not be used to take notes in class, as they are distracting to students and to the professor.
- Please email me all written assignments (in addition to handing in a hard copy).

Required Texts:

- Besteman, Catherine. (2002). Violence: A Reader. NYU Press.
- Betts, Richard. (2008). Conflict After the Cold War. Pearson, Longman Press.

Suggested Text (required chapters/readings are posted on Blackboard):

- Steger, Manfred B and Nancy Lind, eds. (1999). Violence and Its Alternatives. St. Martin's Press.

All other required readings are available on Blackboard or through online databases.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1; September 1: Introductions

Week 2; September 8: Definitions and Concepts

- Arendt, Hannah. "Excerpts from *On Violence*" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*. Steger, Manfred and Nancy Lind, Eds, (1999). St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Wolff, Robert Paul. "On Violence" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Coady, C.A.J. "The Idea of Violence" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Galtung, Johan. "Cultural Violence" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.

Week 3, September 15: International Relations Paradigms and Theories I

- Walt, Stephen. (1998). "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy*. No. 110. Spring 1998. Pp. 29-46.
- Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" in *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*. Richard K. Betts (2008). Pearson, Longman.
- Mearsheimer, John. "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Huntington, Samuel. "The Clash of Civilizations?" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Bull, Hedley. "Society and Anarchy in International Relations" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.

Suggested Reading:

- Cashman, Greg and Leonard C. Robinson. (2007). "Introduction" in *An Introduction to the Causes of War: Patterns of Interstate Conflict from World War I to Iraq*. Rowman & Littlefield. Pp.1-26.
- Franke Wilmer, "International Relations Theory and the Problem of Violence" in *The Social Construction of Man, the State, and War: Identity, Conflict, and Violence in Former Yugoslavia*. Rutledge. Pp. 1-24.
- *Human Security Brief 2007*. Human Security Report Project, Simon Fraser University, Canada
- Conflict Barometer Report 2009 (Introduction)

Week 4, September 22: International Relations Paradigms and Theories II

- Waltz, Kenneth N., "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory" in *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*. Pearson, Longman.
- Gilpin, Robert, "Hegemonic War and International Change" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Kohout, Franz, "Cyclical, Hegemonic, and Pluralistic Theories of International Relations: Some Comparative Reflections on War Causation." *International Political Science Review*. 24(1): 51-66.
- Margaret Mead, "Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.

Week 5, September 29: Challenging and Deconstructing Dominant Paradigms

- Rubenstein, Richard E. and Jarle Crocker. "Challenging Huntington" in *Foreign Policy*, No. 96 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 113-128.
- Sjoberg, Laura. "Gender Hierarchy and War" (Submitted for Publication)
- Scott, Joan. "Gender: A Useful Historical Category" in *American Historical Review* 91, 5, 1986
- Jabri, Vivienne. (1996). *Discourses on Violence*. Manchester University Press. Chapters 2 & 5.

Week 6, October 6: Violence, Nationalism, and the State I

- Gellner, Ernest. "Nations and Nationalism" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Mansfield, Edward and Jack Snyder. "Democratization and War" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Kaufmann, Chaim. "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars" in *Conflict After the Cold War*.
- Ahmed, Akbar. "Ethnic Cleansing: A Metaphor for Our Time?" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.

Week 7, October 13: Violence, Nationalism, and the State II

- Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Violence" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Tickner, Ann J. "Men, Women, and War," in *Conflict after the Cold War*.
- Joseph, Suad. "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East"...

Week 8, October 20: The Justification and Exultation of Violence

- Tamir, Yael. "Pro Patria Mori! Death and the State," in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Keppley-Mahmood, Cynthia. "Playing the Game of Love: Passion and Martyrdom among Khalistani Sikhs," in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Hartsock, Nancy "Masculinity, Heroism and the Making of War" in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics* ed. Adrienne Harris and Yvestra Kings, 1989.
- Michael Taussig. "Putumayo report and the explanation of torture" in *Violence: A Reader*.

Suggested Reading:

- Whitehead, Neil (2004) "On the Poetics of Violence" in *Violence*, SAR Press.
- Hinton, Alex (2004) "The Poetics of Genocidal Practice: Violence under the Khmer Rouge" in *Violence*, SAR Press.
- Renato Rosaldo, "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage," in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004). Pp. 150-156.
- Nordstrom, Carolyn (1997) "Living on the Frontlines" Chapter 4 in *A Different Kind of War Story*, University of Pennsylvania Press.

Week 9, October 27: Structural and Other Sources of Violence.

- Rubenstein, Richard. "Conflict Resolution and the Structural Sources of Conflict" in *Conflict Resolution: Dynamics, Process and Structure*. Ed. Ho-Won Jeong, Brookfield, Ashgate, 1999.
- Paul Farmer. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below." *Daedalus*. Vol. 125. 1996. Pp. 261-283.
- Angell, Norman. "*The Great Illusion*" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Milward, Alan S. "*War as Policy*" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. "Structural Causes and Economic Effects" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Johan Galtung. (1969) "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3). pp. 167-191.

Week 10, November 3: Gender, Violence, and War

- Hartsock, Nancy. "Gender and Sexuality: Masculinity, Violence, and Domination" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Alder, Christine. "Violence, Gender, and Social Change" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Seifert, Ruth. "The Second Front: The Logic of Sexual Violence in Wars" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- Peteet, Julie "Male Gender and Rituals of Resistance in the Palestinian *Intifada*: A Cultural Politics of Violence" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Copelon, Rhonda. Surfacing Gender: Reconceptualizing Crimes Against Women in Time of War, in *Violence: A Reader*.

Suggested Reading:

- Cynthia Cockburn, "The Continuum of Violence: A Gender Perspective on War and Peace," in Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman, *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones* (Univ. of California Press, 2004), pp. 24-44.
- Wood, Elisabeth. 2006. "Variation in Sexual Violence during War." *Politics & Society*. 34; 307

Week 11, November 10: Terrorism

- Crenshaw, Martha (2002) "The Causes of Terrorism" in *Violence: A Reader*.
- Nordstrom, Carolyn. (2002). "Terror Warfare and the Medicine of Peace" in *Violence a Reader*, Chapter 14
- Goody, Jack. (2002). "What is a Terrorist?" *History and Anthropology*. 13(2): 139-143.
- Pape, Robert A. (2003). "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism" in *American Political Science Review*. 97(3): 343-361.
- Beck, Ulrich. (2002). "The Terrorist Threat: World Risk Society Revisited." *Theory, Culture & Society*. 19(4): 39-55.

Suggested Reading:

- Asad, Talal. (2007). *On Suicide Bombing*. Columbia University Press.

Week 12, November 17: Psychology of Mass Violence

- Staub, Ervin. "Genocide and Mass Killing: Origins, Prevention, Healing and Reconciliation." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Jun., 2000).
- Samantha Power, (2001) "Bystanders to Genocide," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 288, No. 2 (Jan.), pp. 84-108. <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2001/09/power.htm>
- John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond. "The Ambiguous Genocide: The U.S. State Department and the Genocide in Darfur." in Peter Andreas and Kelly M. Greenhill. *Sex, Drugs and Body Counts*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press (2010) pp 188 – 214
- Kelly Greenhill, "Counting the Cost: The Politics of Numbers in Armed Conflict" in *Sex, Drugs and Body Counts*: pp 127 – 158.

Suggested Reading:

- Waller, James. (2007). *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*. Oxford University Press

*** THANKSGIVING ***

Week 13, December 1: Alternatives to Violence

- Turpin, Jennifer and Lester R. Kurtz, "Untangling the Web of Violence" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*. "
- Gandhi, Mohandas K., Excerpts from The Essential Writings of Mahatma Gandhi" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.
- King Jr., Martin Luther. "Excerpts from Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience" in *Violence and Its Alternatives* .
- Sharp, Gene. "Beyond Just War and Pacifism" in *Violence and Its Alternatives*.

Week 14, December 8: Revisiting Issues. Critical Review of Theories. Tying it All Together.

Conclusion, in *Violence: A Reader*.

Messages from our sponsors:

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm>). As the code states, "By enrolling at American University and then each semester when registering for classes, students acknowledge their commitment to the Code. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and their responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, examinations of whatever kind, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Students are responsible for learning the conventions of documentation and acknowledgment of sources. American University expects students to complete all examinations, tests, papers, creative projects, and assignments of any kind according to the highest ethical standards, as set forth either explicitly or implicitly in this Code or by the direction of instructors."

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.