

# THEORIES OF CONFLICT, VIOLENCE AND WAR

Dr. Simona Sharoni

## Course Description

This course will survey and critically examine theoretical and empirical scholarship on the causes and conditions of war, violence, and conflict and on the possible solutions to these problems. The main purposes of the course are: to present and critique central theories that have been used to analyze various types of social and political conflicts; to evaluate the usefulness of these theories by applying them to specific case studies; and to encourage and assist students to develop their own perspectives and to construct useful theories for conflict analysis and conflict resolution.

## Course Requirements

1. *Regular Attendance & Class Participation* -- 10% Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to participate in class discussions and activities. No-attendance will be excused *only* if you contact me *before* class. *Four or more unexcused absences may be grounds for a failing grade for the course.* Completing the reading assignments will make it easier to participate in class. A preliminary list of general questions designed to facilitate critical reading is attached to the syllabus. You may use these questions or any other method that works for you to take notes while reading and to prepare points and questions for class discussion.

2. *Responsibility for leading one class discussion (in pairs)*--15% Based on the readings assigned for that class, students will give a 10 minute summary of the readings and lead class discussion (about 20 minutes) with questions designed to integrate the readings into the overall framework of the course and relate them to contemporary political developments.

3. *A Book Review*--25% Choose a book (either fiction or non-fiction) that relates to the topics addressed in the course and write a short review that is both descriptive and analytical. The review should consist of no more than 5 double-spaced pages. Before you start the review submit a short proposal (no more than one double-spaced book) explaining why did you choose this book and how it is related to the course. **Proposals due no later than March 2. Reviews due March 23.**

4. *Conference Report & Class Presentation* -- 20%

Students will be required to attend the annual Spring Conference of the Center for the Study of the Global South which will be held in the Butler Boardroom on April 12-13, 1995. The first day of the conference will be an assessment of the March 1995 Copenhagen Summit for Social Development, and the second day will address important issues facing the September 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women. Students will have a choice of either reporting in detail about one conference session or interviewing one of the speakers. Reports should consist of no more than 5 double-spaced pages. Students should be ready to present and discuss the reports in class on **April 20.**

4. *Final Exam* -- 30%

6 Exam questions will be distributed on the last day of class. You will have to answer 3 questions (no more than 10 double spaced pages). Since it is a take-home exam, you will be expected to substantiate their arguments with references to course readings and class discussions. (Due May 1).

### *Required Readings:*

Vasquez, John. *The War Puzzle* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

olkan, Vamik et al. *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships: Concepts and Theories*

(Lexington, 1990).

Rubin, Jeffery et al. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. (McGraw-Hill, 1994).

*Recommended Readings:*

Burton, John. *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

*Course Outline*

January 19 Introductory Class

--Introduction to the course and to one another, review of the syllabus, discussion of course requirements, readings, and students' expectations for the class.

--Introductory Lecture: "Conflict, Violence and War: Framing the Issues,-Defining the Terms"

**Part I: ANALYZING CONFLICT, VIOLENCE AND WAR**

**January 26 Contending Frameworks for Interpreting Conflict, Violence and War**

This class will provide a general overview of the various theoretical frameworks that the course examines. It is designed to introduce the students to the central concepts, questions and assumptions that underlie each framework.

Vasquez, pp. 3-85

Rubin et al., pp. 1- 11

George Kent. "Analyzing Conflict and Violence." *Peace & Change*, 18, No 4 (October 1993): 373-398.

*Optional :*

Roberto Woito. "Causes of War," in *To End War: A New Approach to International Conflict*, by Roberto Woito. pp. 61-85. New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1982.

Dennis Sandole. "Paradigms, Theories, and Metaphors in Conflict and Conflict Resolution: Coherence or Confusion?" in *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, eds., Dennis J.D Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993.

**February 2 Sources and Causes of Violence, War and Conflict**

Vasquez, pp. 123-152

Rubin et al. 11-26

Suzanne R. Sunday, "Biological Theories of Animal Aggression," in *Genes and Gender*, pp. 50-63.

Sam Marullo & Jen Hlvacek, "War as a Social Problem," in *Rethinking Peace*, eds., Robert Elias & Jennifer Turpin (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rynner Press, 1994), pp. 62-64.

David Adams et al. "The Seville Statement on Violence," in *Rethinking Peace*, pp. 65-68.

Louis Kriesberg, "Sociological Statement on War and Violence," in *Rethinking Peace*, pp. 69-71.

*Optional :*

Dennen, J. van der, and V.S.E. Falger. eds. *Sociobiology and Conflict: Evolutionary Perspectives on Competition Cooperation. Violence and Warfare*, New York: Chapman and Hall, 1990. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Betty Rosoff, "Genes, Hormones, and War," in *Genes and Gender VI: On Peace. War. and Gender -- A Challenge to Genetic Explanations*, ed. Anne E. Hunter, pp. 39-49. New York: The Feminist Press, 1991.

**February 9 Aggression, Political Realism, and Conflicts of Interest**

Vasquez, pp. 86-122 and 153-197

Jack Levy S. "The Causes of War: A Review of Theories and Evidence," in *Behavior. Society. and Nuclear War* edited by Philip Tetlock. 1989.

*Optional:*

John Stoessinger G. *Why Nations Go to War*, 6th Edition, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993. Introduction.

James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff Jr. "Power and Realist Theory," in *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, edited by Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff. Third Edition. New York: Harper and Row, 1990.

### **February 16 Frustration, Relative Deprivation, and Revolt**

Vasquez, pp. 198-224

ed Gurr, "Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence," in *Why Men Rebel*, pp. 22-58.

ester Edwin J. Ruiz, "A Peoples' Quest for Authentic Polity: The Philippine Case," in *Towards a Just World Peace: Perspectives from Social Movements*, eds. Saul Mendlovitz and R.B.J. Walker, pp. 299-332. Butterworths, 1987.

#### *Optional:*

ornel West, "Marxist Theory and the Specificity of Afro-American Oppression," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds., Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 17-34. Urbabana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

### **February 23 The Power of Human Needs**

John Burton, ed. *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, pp.36-57. New York: St. Martin's Press: 1990.  
amashray Roy, "Three Visions of Needs and the Future: Liberalism, Marxism, and Gandhism," in *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*, eds. David J. Carroll, Jerel A. Rosati, and Roger A. Coate, pp. 59-76.

Nancy Fraser, "Struggle over Needs: Outline of a Socialist-Feminist Critical Theory of Late Capitalist Political Culture," in *Unruly Practices: Power. Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* by Nancy Fraser, pp. 161-187. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

#### *Optional:*

David J. Carroll, Jerel A. Rosati, and Roger A. Coate, eds. *The Power of Human Needs in World Society* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988), pp. 1-22, 34-58 and 257-274.

John Burton, *Conflict: Human Needs Theory* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

### **March 2 The Psychodynamics of Violence, War, and Conflict**

amik D. Volkan, "An Overview of Psychological Concepts Pertinent to Interethnic and/or International Relationships," in *The Psvchodynamics of International Relationships. Volume 1: Concepts and Theories*, eds. Volkan et al. pp. 31-46. Lexington Books, 1990.

Demetrios A. Julius, "The Genesis and Perpetuation of Aggression in International Conflicts," in *The Psvchodynamics of Intemational Relationships*. pp. 97-110.

### **March 9 The Politics of Identity and Difference: Cultural Identity, Nationalism, and Ethnic Conflict**

Kumar Rupesinghe, "Theories of Conflict Resolution and Their Application To Protracted Ethnic Conflicts," *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, Vol 18, No. 4, 1987.

errell A. Northrup, "The Dynamic of Identity in Personal and Social Conflict," in *Intractable Conflicts and Their Transformation* eds. Kriesberg et al. pp. 55-82. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1989.

Radhkrishnan, "Nationalism, Gender and the Narrative of Identity," in *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, eds., Andrew Parker, Mary Russo et al. pp. 77-95. New York: Routledge, 1992.

#### *Optional:*

William E. Connolly, "Identity and Difference in Global Politics," in *International/ Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics*, eds., James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, pp. 323-343. Lexington Books, 1989.

**March 16** Spring Break

**March 23 The Cycle of Conflict: Escalation and De-Escalation**

Louis Kriesberg and Stuart Thorson, eds. *Timing and Deescalation of International Conflicts*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1991. Introduction.

Jeffrey Rubin, Dean Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, eds. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*, Second Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1994. Chapters 5-9 (pp. 68-167).

**Part II: CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND WAR TERMINATION**

**March 30 Transformation of Conflicts**

Rubin et al., pp. 27-67

Louis Kriesberg, "Transforming Conflicts in the Middle East and Central Europe," in *Intractable Conflicts and Their Transformation* eds. Kriesberg et al. pp. 109-131. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1989.

Byanyima, Winifred. "How Guerrillas Became Peace Builders," in *New Agendas for Peace Research: Conflict and Security Reexamined*, edited by Elise Boulding, 129-144. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

*Optional :*

John Burton. *Civilizations in Crisis: Where Do we Go From Here?* Preface and Chapter 1. (Forthcoming 1995).

**April 6 The Intervention of Third Parties: Mediation, Negotiation and Problem Solving**

Jeffrey Rubin et al. *Social Conflict*, pp. 168-195 and 196-221.

James H. Laue, "The Emergence and Institutionalization of Third-Party Roles in Conflict." In *Conflict: Readings in Management & Resolution*, edited by John Burton and Frank Dukes, 256-272. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990.

Herbert C. Kelman, "Interactive Problem Solving: The Uses and Limits of a Therapeutic Model for the Resolution of International Conflicts," in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships. Volume II: Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, eds., Vamik Volkan et al. pp. 145-160.

Christopher Mitchell, "Problem-Solving Exercises and Theories of Conflict Resolution," in *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, eds., Dennis Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, pp. 78-94. Manchester University Press, 1993.

*Optional:*

William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1986.

Jacob Bercovitch, ed. *Mediation in International Relations: Multiple Approaches to Conflict Management*, Chapters 1-4.

**April 13 Center for the Global South Conference**

**April 20 Conflict Resolution and Peace "From Below:"  
Unofficial Diplomacy and Grass-Roots Initiatives**

Vamik Volkan, "Official and Unofficial Diplomacy: an Overview," in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships, Volume II: Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, eds., Vamik Volkan et al. pp. 1 - 16.

Demetrios Julius, "The Practice of Track Two Diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli Conferences," in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships Volume II: Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, eds., Vamik Volkan et al. pp. 193-206.

Chadwick Alger and Saul Mendlovitz, "Grass-roots Initiatives: The Challenge of Linkages," in *Towards a Just World Peace: Perspectives from Social Movements*, eds. Saul Mendlovitz and R.B.J. Walker, pp. 333-362. Butterworths, 1987.

**April 27 Reconceptualizing Peace and Security,  
Creating Conditions for Lasting Peace**

Vasquez, pp. 263-291.

Elise Boulding, "States, Boundaries, and Environmental Security," in *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, eds., Dennis Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, pp. 194-208. Manchester University Press, 1993.

Hegedus, "The Challenge of the Peace Movement: Civilian Security and Civilian Emancipation," in *Towards a Just World Peace: Perspectives from Social Movements*, eds. Saul Mendlovitz and R.B.J. Walker, pp. 191-212. Butterworths, 1987.

David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992. pp. 195-262.

**Recommended Readings:**

-- James Silverberg and Patrick Gray. *Aggression and Peacefulness in Humans and Other Primates*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

--Miriam Cooke and Angela Woollacott, eds. *Gendering War Talk*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993.

--Betty Blad. *Psychological Dimensions of War*.

--Elise Boulding, ed. *New Agendas For Peace Research: Conflict and Security Reexamined*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

--Richard Rubenstein. *Alchemists of Revolution: Terrorism in the Modern World*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.

--Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

--Arjun Makhijani. *From Global Capitalism to Economic Justice: An Inquiry into the Elimination of Systemic Poverty. Violence and Environmental Destruction in World Economy*. New York: Apex Press, 1992.

--Alvin Toffler and Heidi. *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1993.

--David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.

--Peter R. Breggin, *Beyond Conflict: From Self-Help and Psychotherapy to Peacemaking*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

--Simona Sharoni, *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's Resistance*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994.