

**INTRODUCTION TO PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES**  
**Polt 119/Psych 118**

**Fall 2012**

**MW -- 11-11:50**  
**Severance 108**

**F – individual section meetings**

**Stephen Crowley (Politics) Rice 211**

**Office hours: MW 1:45-3:00; or by appointment**

[Please sign-up at: <http://tinyurl.com/scrowley>]

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**Stephan Mayer (Psychology) Severance 218**

**Office hours: MW 4:30 – 5:00 or by appointment**

**e-mail: [smayer@oberlin.edu](mailto:smayer@oberlin.edu)**

***Course Description***

This course will introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of Peace and Conflict studies. One of the main tenets of this course is that no one field of study can provide a complete understanding of the issues covered in this field. Consequently, in this course we will take multiple disciplinary perspectives as, for instance, we try to understand the factors that lead to human conflict and aggression, including those that are psychological, sociological, anthropological, environmental, political, economic, religious, and historical in nature. When examining conflict, our analysis will also range from the micro- or interpersonal-level to the macro- or international-level. Additionally, we will explore the potential links between issues of social and environmental justice and violent conflict, including the relationship between different forms of violence, such as structural versus episodic violence, and perceptions of injustice. Besides exploring the sources of conflict and aggression, however, this course will examine how nonviolent conflict can be used to right social wrongs. A major focus of the course will be to critically evaluate nonviolent means for resolving issues of injustice and conflict.

***Class Format and Expectations***

This course will combine both lecture and discussion. For this course to be successful, each person needs to: 1) faithfully read the assigned chapter(s) or article(s); and 2) be willing to discuss this material in class. The amount of reading will vary from week to week: sometimes less, sometimes more. In order to facilitate class discussion, particularly for our weekly discussion sections, you will be asked

on most weeks to post comments on the reading to the Blackboard on-line discussion forum. (These are meant to be informal reflections, but also to demonstrate that you have done the reading, have given it ample consideration, and are ready to discuss it; details about your discussion posting will be distributed before the first posting is due).

There will be a midterm and a final exam. The midterm will occur on Wednesday, October 17, while the final exam is scheduled for December 18. Both exams will be a combination of essays and short answers.

Given that this class is a broad overview of the field of peace and conflict studies, we will be moving rather quickly from topic to topic. To provide you with an opportunity to focus on a particular issue in more depth, you will be required to write either an experiential paper or a research paper. The experiential paper entails becoming involved in a community organization or project related in some way to the topic of this course. If you choose this option, you will need to write a brief (one-page) proposal, articulating how your involvement will relate to the goals of the course. This proposal should be presented to us by October 1. If your proposal is accepted, you will then write a final paper describing the purpose of the group, your involvement with the group, and your reflections on the overall experience you had participating in the group. When reflecting on this experience, *incorporate material from the lectures, readings, and/or class discussions.*

If you decide to write a research paper, the intent is to enable you to learn more about a specific issue related to peace and conflict resolution. If you decide on this option, you will write a brief proposal articulating the nature of the paper, due by November 5. Regardless of the paper option you choose, the paper should not exceed 12 pages (not including references). The paper will be due Dec. 5.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Mid-term exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Paper	25%
Blackboard postings, class participation, attendance	25%

There are no assigned textbooks for this class. All of the readings will be available on Blackboard, and copies of some of the texts will be on reserve in the library. We will adhere to the schedule for the readings below as much as possible, and will let you know of any changes as we proceed.

Please note: We ask that you not use laptop computers or other electronic devices (such as smart phones) during class time. While some use laptops solely to take notes, the temptation to do otherwise is great and it distracts other students. If you have a particular need for an exceptions please let us know.

## ***Class Schedule***

### **Week 1**

W 9/5

#### **Why Study Peace & Conflict?**

F 9/7

#### **Are We Natural Born Killers?**

Reading: Cortright, *Peace: A History*, chapt. 1

Brunk, *Shaping a Vision: The Nature of Peace Studies*

Kohn, *On the Nature of Human Nature*

[Note: We'll be meeting as one group in Severance 108.]

### **Week 2**

M 9/10

#### **So Why Aggression?**

Readings: Fiske, *Basic Human Needs*

Grossman, *On Killing*

Hedges, *The Careerists*

W 9/12

#### **Do We Live in a Toxic Environment?**

Movie: *Killing Us Softly IV*

F 9/14

#### **Discussion Groups**

### **Week 3**

M 9/17

#### **Bullying in the Classroom**

Guest: Jim Boland, Professor of Education, Director of the  
Peace Resource Center, Wilmington College.

W 9/19

#### **Interpersonal Perspectives on Conflict Resolution**

Guest: Yeworkwha Belachew, Oberlin College Ombudsperson,  
Director of OCDC

F 9/21

#### **Discussion Groups**

Reading: Cloud, *When Bullying Turns Deadly*

Szalavitz, *How Not to Raise a Bully*

### **Week 4**

M 9/24

#### **Are We Inherently War Like?**

Reading: Fry, *Beyond War* (selected readings)

W 9/26

Yom Kippur: No class

F 9/27

#### **Hobbes, Realism and the State System**

Readings: Snyder, *One World, Rival Theories*

Tilly, *War Making and State Making as Organized*

*Crime.*

Hobbes, *The State of Nature and the State of War.*

Mearsheimer, *Anarchy and the Struggle for Power*

[Note: We'll be meeting as one group in Severance 108.]

**Week 5**

M 10/1

**Intergroup/National Perspectives: Four Beliefs that Propel Groups Toward Conflict**

Readings: Eidelson & Eidelson, *Five Beliefs Leading to Intergroup Conflict*

Moghaddam, *The Staircase to Terrorism*

[Experiential paper proposal (if chosen) due]

W 10/3

**(Mis)Perceptions that Propel Nations Toward Conflict**

Readings: Kahneman and Renshion, *Why Hawks Win*

Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go to War*

Eller, *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict*

F 10/5

**Discussion Groups**

**Week 6**

M 10/8

**Intergroup/National Perspectives: Ideas that Propel Groups Toward Peace**

Readings: Tam et al., *Postconflict Reconciliation*

Hughes et al., *What's There to Fear?*

W 10/10

**Liberalism and Democratic Peace Theory**

Readings: (review Snyder, *One World*)

Kant, *Perpetual Peace*

Cortright, *Peace: A History*, chaps. 11, 15

Schultz, Perry, Kissinger, & Nunn, *Toward a Nuclear-Free World.*

F 10/12

**Discussion Groups**

**Week 7**

M 10/15

**Conflict Resolution, Prisoners' Dilemma, Getting to Yes**

Readings: Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Ch. 1

Fisher and Ury, *Getting to Yes*

W 10/17

**Midterm**

F 10/19      **War & Peace Art**  
[Note: We'll be meeting as one group in Severance 108.]

**FALL BREAK**

**Week 8**

M 10/29      **Peace, Violence, and the Importance of Inclusionary Thought**  
Reading: Opatow, *Social Injustice*

W 10/31      **Political Economy of War**  
Readings: Galtung, *A Structural Theory of Imperialism*.  
Johnson, *Sorrows of Empire*, Prologue  
King Jr., *Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam*  
*Eisenhower's Farewell Address to the Nation*

Thursday, 11/1, 7:00 PM: Film *Why We Fight* (95 minutes)

F 11/2      **Discussion Groups**

**Week 9**

M 11/5      **Global War on Terror**  
Readings: Pape, *Al Qaeda's Smart Bombs*  
Zunes, *Terrorism and Security in a Post-9/11 World*  
bin Ladin, *Speech to the American People*  
Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* (chapt. 1)  
Mothana, *How Drones Help Al Qaeda*

[Research paper proposal (if chosen) due]

W 11/7      **From State Security to Human Security**  
Reading: (review Snyder, *One World*)  
Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* (chapt. 6)  
Reveron and Mahoney-Norris, *Human Security in a Borderless World*  
Donnelly, *Military Intervention and Human Rights*

F 11/9      **Discussion Groups**

**Week 10**

M 11/12      **History and Theory of Non-Violent Conflict (Part I)**  
Readings: Arend, *On Violence*  
Cortright, *Peace: A History*, chapt.. 10  
Chenoweth and Stephan, *Mobilization and Resistance*

W 11/14      **Non-Violent Conflict: The Serbian Case**

Readings: Popovic, Milivojevic, and Djinovic, *Nonviolent Struggle: 50 Crucial Points*

F 11/16 **Discussion Groups**

**Week 11**

M 11/19 **Thinking Strategically About Nonviolent Change**

Readings:

Thoreau, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

King Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*.

Play the video game: *People Power: The Game of Civil Resistance*

Watch videos 2-4:

<http://training.the99spring.com/training/99spring/>

W 11/21 **Non-Violent Conflict in Practice**

[no reading]

F 11/23 *Thanksgiving break*

**Week 12**

M 11/26 **Non-Violent Conflict in Practice**

Readings: Ackerman & DuVall, *A Force More Powerful* Ch. 9

Ferriss and Sandoval, *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement*

Nepstad, *Nonviolent Resistance in the Arab Spring*

W 11/28 **Gender & Violence: The Girl Effect**

Readings: Mortenson, *Stones into Schools* (selections)

Kristoff & WuDunn, *Half the Sky* (selections)

Tickner, *Man, the State and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security*

F 11/30 **Discussion Groups**

**Week 13**

M 12/3 **Global Warming, Peak Oil, and Violence**

Readings: Hare, *A Safe Landing for the Climate*

Wallace, *The Security Dimensions of Climate Change*.

Kasser, *Shifting Values in Response to Climate Change*.

W 12/5 **Food Security**

Readings: Brown: *The New Geopolitics of Food*

[Research/Experiential paper due]

F 12/7      **Discussion Groups**

**Week 14**

M 12/10      **Is the End of War Possible?**

Readings: Boulding, *Building Utopias in History*

Falk, *On Humane Governance*

Mueller, *War Has Almost Ceased to Exist*

Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*

McCarthy, *Teaching Peace*

W 12/12      **Retrospective View**

F 12/14      **Final Review Session**

**FINAL EXAM: 12/18, 9-11 am.**