

The Psychology of Peace, Conflict, and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland
PSY380/386, Spring, 2017

Professor

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Location of Allendale Classes: 2320 ASH

Course Overview

The Psychology of Peace, Conflict, and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland is a 6-credit study abroad program consisting of two courses (PSY380 and PSY386). The courses will be taught simultaneously, with the first classes meeting on the GVSU Allendale campus and later classes meeting in Ireland.

Psychologists have long studied the dynamics, causes, and consequences of conflict, using a variety of perspectives (e.g., social, biological, and clinical) and on interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels. Although peace and reconciliation represent a more recent sub-discipline within psychology, the emerging field draws from the rich theory in clinical, social, political, and community psychology and has been influenced by literature in sociology, international relations, political science and other fields outside of psychology. Thus, both the psychology of conflict and the psychology of peace and reconciliation are broad topics that could easily be studied over the course of a year or more. Although we will touch upon interpersonal and international conflict, PSY380 and PSY386 will focus primarily on the psychological literature related to violent intergroup and ethnopolitical conflict and peace-building efforts, as they are most relevant to Northern Ireland. The courses will also provide an overview of the society, culture, and history of Northern Ireland, as a context for better understanding the conflict and peace-building and reconciliation efforts.

Most classes will be taught using a seminar approach, in which students will read assigned readings before class and then explore them with the class more deeply in facilitated group discussions. Thus, it is very important for you to read and reflect upon assigned readings before coming to class. We will begin our discussion with some readings and videos on Irish culture and history, with a particular focus on the 20th century sectarian conflict known as “the Troubles.” We will then cover topics related to aggression and conflict, such as the roots of aggression, the causes and consequences of intergroup conflict, and psychological mechanisms used to legitimize oppressive social arrangements (i.e., structural violence). While in Ireland, we will examine the psychology of peace and reconciliation, with an emphasis on the culture of peace, the ongoing process of reconciliation, and empirically-based peace initiatives. In addition to the classes led by Prof. Shupe, you will have classes led by a number of university lecturers and other experts in Ireland. Finally, we will have the opportunity to hear several activists talk about their peace-related work in Northern Ireland, and we will join individuals from local organizations to perform community service work related to peace-building and reconciliation.

Program Objectives

By the end of the program you should have a good understanding of each of the following:

- Important events in the history of Northern Ireland, especially as related to the War of Independence, the sectarian conflict of the late 1900s, peace efforts, the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, and subsequent reconciliation efforts
- The culture of Ireland, including the political and educational systems, customs, languages, music, visual arts, sports, and leisure activities
- Theory and research on the social/environmental and biological causes of aggression, and the influence of culture on aggression
- Theory and research on violence, including the distinction between direct and indirect violence and empirically based interventions
- Theory and research on social, cultural, and cognitive influences on the development of prejudice and discrimination
- Theory and research on psychological issues related to civil, international, and ethno-political conflict, including the escalation of conflict, the role of power, and the role of identity
- The psychology of legitimacy, especially as related to the legitimization of structural violence and intergroup conflict
- The role of memory, narratives, collective identity, and physical markers, in sustaining conflict, building peace, and healing
- Theory and research related to moral disengagement and its role in intergroup conflict/violence
- Theory and research related to the psychological consequences of violence and sustained conflict, for parties both directly and indirectly involved in the conflict
- The distinction between peacemaking and peace-building; the role of culture and the role of moral imagination in peace-building processes
- Research related to psychological peace-building initiatives, including integrated schooling efforts in Northern Ireland and elsewhere
- The role of women in peace processes in Ireland and elsewhere
- Theory and research related to sustained peace and reconciliation, especially as related to civil conflict and other forms of intergroup conflict
- The psychology of activism, and psychologists' contributions to peace-building and the development of cultures of peace

In addition, you should have developed or further developed the following skills and abilities:

- The ability to think critically in interpreting and applying theory and research related to conflict, peace, and reconciliation
- The ability to critically reflect on the values implicit in approaches to understanding conflict, peace, and reconciliation
- The ability to work in groups to discuss and critically interpret readings from the formal psychological literature
- Interpersonal communication skills and collaborative problem solving abilities, especially as related to peace-building and reconciliation
- The ability to integrate published research and theory on peace, conflict, and reconciliation and apply them to "real life" situations
- Skills related to the application of psychological theory and theory-based programs to the prevention of destructive conflict and peace-building and reconciliation processes, in a variety of contexts

Course Evaluation

Grades for PSY380 and PSY386 will be given based on participation, thought papers, reflection papers, reading-related discussion questions, and speaker questions.

Participation. Since the courses have a strong experiential component, active participation is essential and will be weighted heavily in your course grades. Participation grades will be based on your participation in classes, in group discussions, on excursions, and in class-related activities; your active listening and attentiveness to speakers in Ireland; your participation in the community organization work; and your appropriate and respectful behavior toward the people of Ireland, and others in our group. Participation will be worth 50 points in each course.

Thought papers and reflection papers. You will be required to write and submit thought papers and reflection papers, in which you address a series of prompts. Although the content and style of the papers will be somewhat similar, thought papers generally will be more formally academic, and require you to critically examine course readings and to link concepts discussed in the readings and in class to our experiences in Ireland. The less formal reflection papers will ask you to draw upon your own experiences and insights to respond to statements, questions, or themes related to the course content. Thought papers will be worth 15 points each, and reflection papers will be worth 10 points each.

Reading-related discussion questions & Speaker questions. You will be required to turn in 3-5 open ended discussion questions related to a number of the assigned readings. Your questions should be thoughtful questions that could generate group discussion and demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the readings. You will also be required to turn in 3-5 open-ended questions for each guest lecturer or speaker, based on the speaker's presentation and/or writings. Each set of reading-based and each speaker-related questions will be worth 5 points.

Grade Determination

PSY380 Course:

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Total # points</u>	<u>Approximate Weighting</u>
2 thought papers (TP1-TP2)	30	19%
3 reflection papers (RP1-RP3)	30	19%
4 sets of reading-related questions (Allendale)	20	13%
5 sets of speaker questions	25	16%
Allendale & 1 st trip week participation	50	32%
Total	155	

PSY386 Course:

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Total # points</u>	<u>Approximate Weighting</u>
3 thought papers	45	28%
2 reflection papers (RP4-RP5)	20	12%
4 sets of reading-related questions (Ireland)	20	12%
5 sets of speaker questions	25	16%
2 nd & 3 rd trip week participation	50	31%
Total	160	

Tentative Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Date	Topics, Readings, & Homework	Assignments Due
M, 5/1 9:30-12n	Orientation 3 <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BBC History of Ireland, Part 3 (watch & respond to questions) Reflection Paper 1 Aggression & violence	RP 1
T, 5/2 9:30-12; 1-2:30pm	Early History of Ireland <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BBC History of Ireland, Part 4 (watch & respond to questions) Reflection Paper 2 Power & Legitimacy <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Tyler (2006)</i> 	RP 2
W, 5/3 9:30-12n	The Period of Conflict in Northern Ireland <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Cairns & Darby (1998; pp. 754-756)</i> BBC's <i>Provos, Loyalists, and Brits</i> (watch; respond to questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provos, segment 1 (<i>Born Again</i>) Provos, segment 2 (<i>Second Front</i>) 	
Th, 5/4 9:30-12; 1-2:30pm	The Period of Conflict in Northern Ireland (cont.) <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection Paper 3 BBC's <i>Provos, Loyalists, and Brits</i> (watch; respond to questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyalists, segment 1 (<i>No Surrender</i>) Intergroup conflict; structural violence <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Opotow (2001)</i> & write questions 	RP3 Questions: Opotow
F, 5/5		TP 1
M, 5/8 9:30-12n	Moral disengagement, dehumanization, and deindividuation <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Moghaddam (2005)</i> 	
T, 5/9 9:30-12; 1-2:30pm	Irish literature & history (Prof. Kurt Bullock) <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read literature readings (TBD) Intractable conflict; ethnopolitical conflict <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Staub (2001; p. 289-297)</i> Thought Paper 2 	TP 2
W, 5/10 9:30-12n	Intractable conflict (cont.); escalation <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>Jonas & Fritzsche (2014)</i> & write questions Read <i>Lavi & Bar-Tal (2015)</i> & write questions 	Questions: Both readings

Th, 5/11 9:30-12; 1-2:30pm	Effects of war <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Gifford (2006)</i> & write questions • Read <i>Garbarino et al. (2010)</i> • Read <i>Cairns & Darby (1998; pp. 756-758)</i> Intro to peace psychology & conflict resolution <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Christie et al. (2008)</i> & write questions • Read <i>Kelman (2009)</i> 	Questions: Gifford Questions: Christie et al.
F, 5/12		TP 3
F, 5/19 (airport)	Peacemaking in Northern Ireland <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC's <i>Provos, Loyalists, and Brits</i> (watch; respond to questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provos, segment 4 (<i>Endgame</i>) • Loyalists, segment 3 (<i>War and Peace</i>) 	
TBD	Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland (cont.) <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>CAIN website reading</i> 	
TBD	Women & peacebuilding <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Kilmurray & McWilliams (2011)</i> & write questions • <i>Stephenson (2009)</i> & write questions 	Questions: Both readings
TBD	Psychological obstacles to peace; forgiveness & healing <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Wessells (2004)</i> & write questions 	Questions: Wessells
TBD	Constructing ethos of peace in interethnic conflict <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Bar-Tal (2000)</i> • Reflection paper 4 	RP 4
TBD	Transitional Justice <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Hamber (2012)</i> & write questions 	Questions: Hamber
TBD	Reconciliation <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Nadler & Saguay (2004)</i> & write questions 	Questions: Nadler & Saguay
TBD	Psychologists as activists & peacebuilders <u>HW for this class:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read excerpt from <i>Staub (2015)</i> • Read <i>Van Zomeren et al. (2008)</i> • Reflection paper 5 	RP5
M, 6/12		TP 4
M, 6/19		TP 5

Readings

- Bar-Tal, D. (2000). From intractable conflict through conflict resolution to reconciliation: Psychological analysis. *Political Psychology*, 21, 351-365.
- Cairns, E., & Darby, J. (1998). The conflict of Northern Ireland. *American Psychologist*, 53, 754-760.
- Christie, D. J., Tint, B., Wagner, R. V., & Winter, D. D. (2008). Peace psychology for a peaceful world. *American Psychologist*, 63, 540-552.
- Garbarino, J., Zurenda, L., & Vorrasi, J.A. (2010). Long-term effects of war on children. In G. Fink (Ed.), *Stress of war, conflict and disaster* (pp. 568-579). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Gifford, R.K. (2006). Psychological aspects of combat. In T.W. Britt, C.A. Castro, & A.B. Adler (Eds.), *Military life: The psychology of serving in peace and combat*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Hamber, B. (2012). Transitional justice and intergroup conflict. In L.R. Tropp (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of intergroup conflict* (pp. 328-343) New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hewstone, M., & Cairns, E. (2002). Social psychology and intergroup conflict. In D. Chiot & M. Seligman (Eds.), *Ethnopolitical warfare: Causes, consequences and possible solutions* (pp. 319 - 342). APA: Washington, D.C.
- Jonas, E., & Fritzsche, I. (2013). Destined to die but not to wage war: How existential threat can contribute to escalation or de-escalation of violent intergroup conflict. *American Psychologist*, 68, 543-558.
- Kelman, H.C. (2009). Interactive problem solving: Informal mediation by the scholar-practitioner. *Zeitschrift fur Konfliktmanagement*, 12(3).
- Kilmurray, A., & McWilliams, M. (2011). Struggling for peace: How women in Northern Ireland challenged the status quo. *Solutions Journal*, 2.
- Lavi, I., & Bar-Tal, D. (2015). Violence in prolonged conflicts and its socio-psychological effects. In J. Lindert and I. Levav (Eds.), *Violence and mental health* (pp. 3-25). Springer.
- Moghaddam, F.M. (2005). The staircase to terrorism: A psychological exploration. *American Psychologist*, 60, 161-169.
- Morrow, D. (2004). Seeking peace amid the memories of war: Learning from the peace process in Northern Ireland. In H. Langholtz & C. Stout (Eds.), *The psychology of diplomacy* (pp. 111-138). Praeger Publishers: Westport: CT.
- Nadler, A., & Saguay, T. (2004). Reconciliation between nations: Overcoming emotional deterrents to ending conflicts between groups. In L.R. Tropp (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of intergroup conflict*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Opatow, S. (2001). Social injustice. In D.J. Christie, & D.A. Winter (Eds.), *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century* (pp. 102-109). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Staub, E. (2001). Ethnopolitical and other group violence: Origins and prevention. In *Ethnopolitical warfare: Causes, consequences, and possible solutions*, by D. Chirot & M.E.P. Seligman (Eds.), pp. 289-304. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Staub, E. (2013). Building a peaceful society: Origins, prevention, and reconciliation after genocide and other group violence. *American Psychologist*, 68, 576–589.
- Staub, E. (2015). How can we become good bystanders—in response to needs around us and in the world? *The roots of goodness and resistance to evil* (pp. 151-155). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Stephenson, C.M. (2009). Gender equality and a culture of peace. In J. Rivera (Ed.), *Handbook on building cultures of peace* (pp. 123-138). New York: Springer Business and Science Media.
- Tyler, T.R. (2006). Psychological perspectives on legitimacy and legitimation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57, 375-400.
- Van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., Spears, R. (2008). Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134, 504-535.
- Wessells, M. (2004). Diplomacy in an era of intrastate conflict: Challenges of transforming cultures of violence into cultures of peace. In H. Langholtz & C. Stout (Eds.), *The psychology of diplomacy* (pp.59-77). Praeger Publishers: Westport: CT.