

The Psychology of Peace, Conflict, and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland
Spring, 2018
PSY386

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Location of Allendale Classes: 2320 ASH

Readings:

Feeney, B. (2004). *A short history of the Troubles*. Dublin, Ireland: The O'Brien Press. (available as eBook)

Additional readings (see list below)

Course Overview:

The Psychology of Peace, Conflict, and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland is a 6-credit study abroad program consisting of 3 weeks of class meetings on the GVSU Allendale campus and three weeks of travel and study in Ireland. The course focuses on the psychology of conflict and on the psychology of peace and reconciliation, two topics that have often been studied independently. Psychologists have long studied the dynamics, causes, and consequences of conflict and violence, from a variety of perspectives (e.g., social, biological, and clinical) and on interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels. Unlike theory and research on conflict, the specific focus on peace and reconciliation is relatively new to psychology. The emerging field of peace psychology draws on rich theory from clinical, social, political, and community psychology, and is influenced by literature from 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, 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 the North of Ireland. The course will also provide an overview of the society, culture, and history of Ireland, as a context for better understanding the conflict and peace-building and reconciliation efforts.

Most classes will be taught using a seminar approach; students will read assigned readings before class and then examine them more deeply in facilitated class discussions. Thus, it is very important to read and reflect upon assigned readings before coming to class. The course will begin with an overview of 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 conflict and war, such as the causes and consequences of intergroup conflict, the ethos of conflict, the effects of war, and psychological mechanisms used to legitimize oppressive social arrangements. 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, there will be a number of classes led by university lecturers and other experts in Ireland. We will also visit local organizations and hear from individuals who have actively worked toward peace and healing, and we will spend several days working in Rowandale Primary School, one of the very few integrated primary schools in Northern Ireland.

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 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 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 the North of 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
- The different types of justice, and theory and research related to collective action

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
- Skills related to the application of psychological theory and theory-based programs to the prevention of destructive conflict and peace-building and reconciliation processes

Course Evaluation

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

Participation. Since PSY386 has a strong experiential component, active participation is essential and will be weighted heavily in your course grade. Participation grades will be based on 1) participation in classes, in group discussions, on class-related excursions, and in class-related activities; 2) active listening and attentiveness to speakers in Ireland; 3) written questions related to speakers, lecturers, and organizational visits; 4) participation in service-learning work at Rowandale Primary school; and 5) appropriate and respectful behavior toward the people of Ireland, Prof. Shupe, and others in our group. Participation will be worth 105 points.

Thought papers and reflection papers. You will be required to write and submit 5 thought papers and 7 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 summary & discussion questions. You will be required to turn in a brief summary and 3-5 open ended discussion questions related to a number of the assigned readings. The questions should be thoughtful questions that demonstrate your understanding of the readings and generate class discussion. Each summary & questions set will be worth 5 points. The point breakdown for final course grades is given below.

	<u>Points</u>	<u>Weighting</u>
Thought papers (5)	75pts (5x15)	26%
Reaction papers (7)	70pts (7x10)	24%
Reading questions (8)	40pts (8x5)	14%
Participation in Allendale	30pts	10%
Participation in Ireland	75pts	26%
Total	290pts	

Grade Determination

Grades will be determined using the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
A	92.5-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87.5-89.5%
B	82.5-87%
B-	80-82%
C+	77.5-79.5%
C	72.5-77%
C-	70-72%
D+	67.5-69.5%
D	60-67%
F	0-59.5%

Tentative Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Date	Topics	HW for this class
M, 4/30 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to conflict • Prejudice & discrimination; intergroup conflict 	Refection paper 1 (cultural cues)
W, 5/2 9:30-1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral exclusion • Power, legitimacy, & justice • Early Irish history 	1) Read Lambert's Irish history reading http://www.localhistories.org/irehist.html or watch BBC's "The Story of Ireland" Parts 1 & 2 2) Watch BBC's "The Story of Ireland" Part 3 ("The Age of Revolution"); available online 3) Read Opatow (2001) & Write questions
Th, 5/3 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power, legitimacy, & justice (cont.) • Collective action • Early Irish history 	Refection paper 2 (collective action)
M, 5/7 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI sectarian conflict • Escalation of conflict; deindividuation 	1) Read Feeney (2004), chs. 1-3 2) Watch Bloody Sunday 3) Read Jonas & Fritsch (2014) 4) Read Lavi & Bar-tal (2015) 5) Thought paper 1
W, 5/9 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI sectarian conflict • Moral disengagement 	1) Read Feeney (2004), chs. 4-7 2) Write questions (note key events/people)
Th, 5/10 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnopolitical & intractable conflict • Culture of conflict • Effects of war 	Ethnopolitical/intractable: 1) Read Bar Tal et al., (2015; pp. 73-77 only) 2) Read Staub (2001; p. 289-297 only) Effects: 1) Read Gifford (2006) 2) Read Cairns & Darby (1998; pp. 756-758) 3) Read Prasad & Prasad (2009) 4) Reflection paper 3 (effects)
M, 5/14 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature (Prof. Kurt Bullock) • Intro to conflict resolution 	1) Read "Everything in This Country Must..." 2) Thought paper 2 (psychological processes)

T, 5/15 9:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to peace psych • Conflict management styles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Christie, Tint, Wagner, & Winter (2008) 2) Read Kelman (2009) 3) Write questions (2-3 for each)
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace process in N. Ireland • Women in the peacebuilding process 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read CAIN website reading by Ingraham (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/talks.htm) 2) Read Feeney (2004), chs. 8-9 3) Read Kilmurray & McWilliams (2011) & Stephenson (2009); write questions for both
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultures of peace 	Read Mayton (2009), Ch. 6
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to reconciliation 	Read IDEA reading, chs 1&2 (pp. 10-39)
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological challenges – forgiveness, trust, & healing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read Wessells (2004) & write questions 2) Read Nadler & Saguay (2004; pp. 29-33 only) 3) Read Bar Tal (2000; pp. 355-360 only)
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal memory & identity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read Nolan & Bryan (2016; pp 2-17 only) 2) Read McQuaid (2015; pp. 23-32 only)
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional justice, restorative justice, & retributive justice 	Read Hamber (2012) & write questions
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peacemakers • The Third Side 	Read Staub (2015; pp. 151-155 only)

Readings

- Bar-Tal, D. (2000). From intractable conflict through conflict resolution to reconciliation: Psychological analysis. *Political Psychology, 21*, 351-365.
- Bar-Tal, D., Halperin, E., & Pliskin, R. (2015). Why is it so difficult to resolve intractable conflicts peacefully? A sociopsychological explanation. In *Handbook of international negotiation: Interpersonal, intercultural, and diplomatic perspectives* (pp. 73-92). Springer.
- 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. Chirof & M. Seligman (Eds.), *Ethnopolitical warfare: Causes, consequences and possible solutions* (pp. 319 - 342). APA: Washington, D.C.
- Jonas, E., & Fritsche, 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), 74-79.
- 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.
- McQuaid, S.D. (2015). Parading memory and remembering conflict: Collective memory in transition in Northern Ireland. *Int. J. Polit. Cult. Soc., 30*, 23-41.
- 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.
- Nolan & Bryan (2016). *Flags: Toward a new understanding*.

- 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.
- Prasad, A.N., & Prasad, P.L. (2009). Children in conflict zones. *MJAFI*, 65, 166-169.
- 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.