

Psychology 327
January, 2008

PEACE PSYCHOLOGY

Instructor: Dr. Mike Wessells

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Office Hours: Daily: 11:00 – 12:00

Or by appointment

Goals and Overview:

Humanity has emerged recently from its bloodiest century ever. We now live in an era rife with terrorist threats and with intrastate, ethnopolitical conflicts that kill mostly civilians and in which former neighbors commit atrocities, murder and rape on a large scale, and destroy the fabric of societies. These conflicts and the terrorism that is often interwoven with them often evolve out of systems of structural violence characterized by oppression, racism, environmental degradation, poverty, and uneven wealth distribution. At the same time, interstate conflicts continue to damage human well-being on a large scale. In this context, it is timely to analyze how psychology may contribute to the construction of peace and social justice.

This course will challenge you think critically about the most urgent, complex issues confronting humanity and to reflect on your own responsibilities as a citizen and a rising professional. It analyzes the causes of and connections between direct violence at levels such as the family, community, ethnic group, and society. Looking at both the macro- and micro-social levels, it examines the interactions between direct violence and structural violence that build cultures of violence. These cultures are supported by social institutions and norms and also by a psychological infrastructure of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavior. With this understanding of how cultures of violence work, the course asks how cultures of violence can be transformed into cultures of peace. This requires understanding of the many tasks of peacemaking and peacebuilding: healing past emotional and social wounds; strengthening processes of nonviolent conflict resolution; building norms that protect human rights; truth-telling and reconciliation; increasing tolerance and respect for cultural diversity; encouraging democratization and participatory processes; enabling sustainable development; and building a culture of prevention. In examining these topics, we will reflect critically on the role of psychologists, the ethical complexities involved in addressing these issues, the values and orientation of Western psychology, and the need to reconstruct psychology to enable it to make its fullest contribution to human well being.

Required Readings:

It is essential to complete and reflect upon the readings before class each day. The main readings come from two sources:

Christie, D., Wagner, R., & Winter, D. (Eds.)(2001). *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (available on CD-ROM by permission of the editors)

Wessells, M. G. (2006). *Child soldiers: From violence to protection*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (available in College bookstore)

Additional readings, also available on the CD-ROM and designated by asterisks, are as indicated below.

Evaluation:

One essay test and a comprehensive final exam will be given, and each will determine 40% of the final grade. The tests, which are take-home, are all essay and require mastery, integration, and critical analysis.

Your participation is a key part of the learning process in this course, and it is an expected feature of each class. Your regular attendance and thoughtful participation will determine 20% of your final grade. We will be examining difficult questions that admit no easy answers and that require depth of thought, tolerance, compassion, maturity, and willingness to examine hidden cultural assumptions. Curiosity and participation are highly valued, and dialogue is viewed as an opportunity for mutual learning and making connections across the various theories and approaches you have studied. Each day you should come prepared to react to readings, to discuss what you found interesting or misguided, to raise questions, and most important, to think about the implications for building peace with social justice.

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

A+:	97 – 100	C-:	70 - 73
A:	94 – 96	D+:	67 – 69
A-:	90 – 93	D:	64 - 66
B+:	87 – 89	D-:	60 - 63
B:	84 – 86	F:	Below 60%
B-:	80 – 83		
C+:	77 - 79		
C:	74 – 76		

Course Outline:

<i>DATES</i>	<i>TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT</i>
Jan. 7	Introduction & Systems Perspective
Jan. 8	Ethnopolitical Conflict Christie et al.: Introduction (1-13); Chapter 3 (39-48) Wessells, Ch. 1
Jan. 9	Mass Killing: Genocide, Moral Exclusion, and Terrorism Christie et al.: Chapter 6 (76-86); Chapter 8 (102-109) *Wessells, M.(2002). Terrorism, social injustice, and peacebuilding. In C. E. Stout (Ed.), <i>Psychology of terrorism, vol. 4</i> (pp. 57-73). Westport, CT: Praeger. (on CD-ROM)
Jan. 10	Direct and Structural Violence—Child Recruitment & Soldiering Wessells, Ch. 2-4

- Jan. 11 Gender based Violence
Christie et al.: Chapter 1 (19-27); Chapter 11 (130-138)
- Jan. 14 Human Rights and Liberation Psychology: Voices from Latin America and South Africa
Christie et al.: Chapter 13 (149-157); Chapter 14 (158-168); Chapter 24 (295-306)
- Jan. 15 The Psychosocial Impact of Violence on Children (Dr. Kathleen Kostelny)
Christie et al.: Chapter 9 (110-119); Chapter 10 (120-129)
Wessells, Ch. 6
- Jan. 16 Children in Iraq
Film: "If Turtles Could Fly" (Dr. Kathleen Kostelny)
- Jan. 17 Reintegration of Formerly Recruited Children (Dr. Kathleen Kostelny)
Wessells, Ch. 7-9
- Jan. 18 **Test One due by 5 PM EST (email to mwessell@rmc.edu)**
- Jan. 21 After the Conflict: Peacekeeping and Psychosocial Assistance
Christie et al.: Section III-Peacemaking (169-172)
Chapter 15 (173-182), Chapter 20 (240-250), Chapter 22 (262-276)
- Jan. 22 Truth, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation
Christie et al.: Chapter 21 (251-261)
Reading from Desmond Tutu, to be distributed
- Jan. 23 Breaking Cycles of Violence: Preventing Child Recruitment
Wessells, Ch. 10
U. N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (read from internet), including the Optional
Protocol on Children and Armed Conflict
- Jan. 24 The Vietnam War and its Psychological Legacy (Guest: Wayne Smith)
Reading to be announced
- Jan. 25 Nonviolent Conflict resolution
Christie et al.: Chapter 16 (183-209), Chapter 29 (341-349)
- Jan. 28 Building Peaceful Schools and Educating for Peace
Christie et al.: Chapter 19 (223-239), Chapter 27 (324-329)
- Jan. 29 Gandhian Perspectives: Nonviolent Social Action
Christie et al.: Section IV-Peacebuilding
Chapter 23 (282-294), Chapter 25 (307-323)
- Jan. 30: Action for Peace
Christie et al.: Chapter 28 (330-340), Chapter 30 (350-372)
- Jan. 31: The Agony of Iraq: Challenges to International Peace

*Wessells, M. (2006). The impact of U. S. anti-terrorism interventions on terrorist motivation:

Preliminary research on youth in Afghanistan and Iraq. In P. Kimmel & C. Stout (Eds.), *Collateral damage: The psychological consequences of America's war on terrorism* (pp. 165-188). Westport, CT: Praeger. (on CD-ROM)

Outside reading of one's choice

Feb. 1: **Final exam due**