CFT 430: Senior Seminar in Conflict Studies

(Un)Civil Conflict

New War in post-Colonial Africa

Course Description and Course Objectives

Conflict, it is said, is ubiquitous. It is a defining element of the human condition. As students of conflict you are no doubt familiar with these renderings. But truly not all conflict is created equal. In this, your capstone course in Conflict Studies, we will explore one manifestation of conflict that demands our focused attention. Civil War will be our explanandum. This is not because civil war is inherently more important than other forms of conflict. Nor is it even the most common. I suggest that civil war has forced itself onto our agenda. It has done so thanks to the frequency with which it seems to occur, the intensity that it has the potential to attain, and, some say increasingly, the horror of the unthinkable atrocities that are committed by its parties.

Whatever the reasons for doing so, I hold that focusing on violent civil conflict is defensible on moral and ethical as well as theoretical/academic grounds. On a moral/ethical level, its biological and physical destruction is often of such scale that this alone spells out the need for deeper understanding. For in understanding might lay the prospects for constructive engagement with conflict and for progressive transformation. On theoretical or academic grounds civil war constitutes a pestle in which we might pound out insights into more general conflict theory and practice at all levels and across all manner of typology. Civil war is, after all, conflict that takes place – it is *experienced* – at all conceptual levels.

Violent civil conflict is *intra-personal*: Ask the woman being told she must forgive and forget atrocities committed by warring parties in the name of national reconciliation if the memories of her butchered children do not constitute mental warfare. Civil war is *inter-personal*: Though often couched in grand ideological terms or for stakes of global proportions, at the end of the day armed civil conflict involves individual men and women – and children – killing other individual men and women – and children. And this killing often occurs among the intimately familiar. Might there be, in fact, some shocking truth about hurting only the ones you love? Civil war is *intra-group*: Rebel organizations break apart and form splinter factions that take up the cause – or some new cause – even long after it has been declared satisfied. Civil war is *inter-group*: Mapping contemporary civil war often reveals a global landscape of warring and intervening parties: governmental, non-governmental, criminal and humanitarian.

Civil war is, in the end, a complex affair whose scale and intensity affords the student of conflict innumerable problems to ponder and a great many access points through which we might ‘intervene.’ Whether your interests or career plans lean toward the academic/research side of Conflict Studies or toward practice and third party intervention, our exploration of civil war is intended to provide you with an opportunity to build on past course work while you explore new theoretical and practical problematiques. We will emphasize critical interrogation of argumentation and data analysis. Our goal in doing so is to sharpen your own critical thinking skills, thus empowering you with the voice of a conflict professional. All the while, it is my hope that we do not lose site of what this is fundamentally about. War claimed the lives of a 160 million people in the Twentieth Century alone. Whether the 21st Century shall demonstrate any capacity to learn from experience is very much an open question.

Performance Elements of the Seminar

1. Class participation (30%)
2. Conflict Map (10%)
3. Class Lead (15%)
4. Seminar Paper (45%)
   1. Proposal/précis (5%)
   2. Literature review (10%)
   3. Submission of seminar paper (15%)
   4. Revision(s) (10%)
   5. Public presentation (5%)

**Class participation**

This accounts for nearly 1/3 of your seminar grade. If you do everything very well in this class, but do not participate in the seminar’s joint construction of knowledge, your grade could suffer as much as 2 letter grades. That is, were you to submit A-level work, but fail to meaningfully participate in regular seminar discussion, your grade could conceivably fall to C.

*What is participation*? This goes way beyond answering and asking questions. What this seminar requires is *informed participation.* You are expected to come to every class session having read the material and reflected on its merits. You should engage with every topic with the same set of predicating questions: What *is* this material about? What are the big issues and problems being addressed? How is our understanding of contemporary armed conflict advanced – or not – by this material? What is the significance of that contribution? What is the nature of the controversy,

if any, surrounding the material (i.e., is the approach taken by an author controversial or problematic)?

One of the great things about Conflict Studies is its interdisciplinarity. That means each of you comes to this seminar uniquely qualified to participate. No one knows as much as you do about your study of conflict. Each of you arrives here with a unique constellation of courses that constitutes Conflict Studies. This seminar should reflect that fact. To the degree that it does is the degree to which we will succeed in making this the capstone experience you deserve.

**Conflict Map**

To launch our exploration of the conflict studies landscape, I seek to focus our attention on the multidimensional nature of conflict. To do so, we will engage in an exercise familiar to all conflict resolvers/analysts – conflict mapping. The purposes of conflict mapping are as varied as the approaches, but for our present purposes I seek to assess your familiarity with the components of conflict (context, parties, causes, dynamics, etc.). Your assigned map is the conflict in Côte d’Ivoire. The assigned reading for this case is the McGovern text. See also the Wehr Conflict Mapping text on Moodle for guidance. More about this in our first meeting.

**Class Lead**

For each topic between week 3 (Ontology of Armed Conflict: The New War thesis) and week 11 (Intervention and Third Party Practice – peacebuilding) one student will take the lead in moving us through the discussion. (I will interact with the presentation to help us cover all the relevant bases.) In past years students have relied on PowerPoint to good effect, but you need not do so. Your presentation will frame or package the material for our analysis by identifying the major threads of inquiry that run through the material and how these relate to our analysis of contemporary violent civil conflict. The presenter is not expected to *re-hash* the material for us. Indeed, given the volume and scope of the material for which you are responsible you could not hope to reasonably re-state the authors’ narrative(s) completely. Rather, we will be looking for the presenter to help launch our exploration of the topic. Questions you should consider addressing in your presentation include:

* What are *the major concerns* raised by the author(s)?
  + Here you might offer – very briefly – examples of the text that typify the kind of problem being addressed, or the kind of argument being advanced, in the reading.
* What is *the significance* of these concerns and of this material? (This is the ‘so-what’ question you might have heard me address.)
* How does this material, these questions, contribute to – or fail to contribute to – our understanding of contemporary violent civil conflict?

**Seminar Term Paper**

This is your capstone experience in Conflict Studies. I want the term paper to be the central constitutive element of this capstone. As you have no doubt learned by now, academia is both an individual and collective enterprise. Our work, our contribution, is ultimately determined by its relationship to a larger epistemic community and/or community of praxis. At the end of the day, however, the work is often one person working out a puzzle that she or he finds of critical importance. In light this duality; I have designed your seminar term paper as both a collective and individual enterprise. You will be writing an article length paper on a topic of your choice – chosen in collaboration with me and, in some respects, the rest of the class. The paper will be, in effect, a chapter in a collectively authored manuscript. That is, we will be producing an “edited volume.” Time permitting (and last year it did not) I will write the introductory chapter. Should we find the resources, I will have our papers bound and printed locally. There will be additional stipulations on the collective nature of this enterprise, but those can wait until we approach the relevant target dates.

For now, please focus on the four elements of the individual dimension of the term paper. You will be required to submit 1) a brief research proposal, or précis, 2) a literature review, 3) the actual paper/chapter and 4) subsequent revisions following as much time to workshop as we can provide.

The *précis* consists of a statement that identifies the general area of academic or practical interest your research will occupy, what guiding question or problem you will seek to answer or unravel, and whatever methods of inquiry/analysis you will likely employ. This is a serious component of the process. It is worth 5% of your total grade. It is expected that you will have done 15-20 hours of preliminary research before you can craft a proposal such as this. This is not, therefore, merely a synopsis of a hypothetical paper. It will constitute the grounding document upon which your chapter will be constructed. These *précis* – in their final form – will be shared with the class so that others know the nature of your work and therefore how their own relates to yours and vice versa.

* The literature review consists of your analysis of the current state of the art concerning the problem you are taking on. This 5-7 page essay will lay out the scholarly or scholar-practitioner terrain. The questions that drive a literature review are straightforward: Who has said what concerning your problem? How has thinking on this issue developed over time? What is the current state of opinion concerning your problem? What problems remain or what oversights persist? The final element of the review is the transition, actually, to your own contribution. What is your relationship to this literature? Where do you reside? That is, with whom might you agree/disagree? What is the nature of your contribution to this literature? How does what you are doing advance our understanding of this theoretical or practical problem? There is, by the way, an example of an undergraduate literature review on the Moodle site. You can also see a very good example of a literature review in the Auesserre book (*The Trouble with Congo*). Her review begins on page 14 and runs to page 31.
* Submit your term paper at least two weeks prior to the end of the term. This is *not* a rough draft. The deadline for the term paper is two weeks before the end of the term.
* Revisions of your paper will begin upon completion of the final draft, or at the latest two weeks before the end of term. These revisions will reflect critical assessments of your paper. Critical feedback and revision are essential elements of academic and practical knowledge construction. The degree to which we advance our understanding of conflict and/or the quality of our practice is absolutely a function of our willingness and ability to respond effectively to critical examination of our work. These deliberations will culminate in presentations of our material in a mini-conference – time permitting – or in venues to be determined.

**Presentation of Research**

The final 2-3 weeks of the course are reserved for revisions of your paper and for presentations of your work. The latter will take place in either a mini-conference setting in the final days of the class or in the time bank of our final examination. Details regarding the form and venue for these presentations will be determined as we approach the end of our reading schedule.

**Final requirement**

Work. Hard. This is a joint venture. I am committed to doing whatever I can to make this work for you. I do so on the assumption that you are equally committed.

Books for Purchase

Autesserre, Severine. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Darby, John and Roger MacGinty (eds.). 2008. *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-War Reconstruction* 2nd Edition, New York: Palgrave MacMillan

Gberie, Lansana. 2005. *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press

Kaldor, Mary. 2007*. New and Old War: Organized Violence in a Global Era* 2nd Edition Stanford: Stanford University Press

Lederach, John Paul. 2003. *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books

McGovern, Mike. 2011. *Making War in Côte d’Ivoire.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Richards, Paul (ed.). 2005. *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts.* Athens and Oxford: Ohio University and James Currey

Uvin, Peter. 2009. *Life after Violence: A People's Story of Burundi*, London: Zed Books

Schedule of Topics and Reading

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|  | **Topic** | **Reading** |
| 4 February | Problem Definition:  Contemporary Intrastate War and the “Liberal Peace”   * So what? * Why civil war? * Why Africa? | Themnér and Wallensteen, “Armed Conflict: 1946-2012”  Ensenbach, “Fact File: The State of Peace and Security in Africa”  Boas, “The Liberian Civil War: New War or Old War?”  Gleditsch, “The Liberal Moment 15 Years on”  MacGinty and Richmond, “Myth or Reality: Opposing Views on the Liberal Peace and Post-war Reconstruction” |
| 11 February | Case Study: Côte d’Ivoire | McGovern, *Making War in Côte d’Ivoire*  Aning and Salihu, “The Protection of Civilians in Peace Support Operations: Lessons from Côte d’Ivoire” |
| 18 February | Ontology of Armed Conflict: The New War Thesis | Kaldor, *New & Old Wars* |
| 25 February | Conflict Transformation  précis due | Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*  Bah, “Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Côte d’Ivoire”  Kriesberg, “The State of the Art in Conflict Transformation” |
| 4 March | Case Study: Sierra Leone | Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa* |

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| 11 March | Research Landscape: Explaining Civil War | Peters 2007. Understanding Recent African Wars  Ross 2004. What Do We Know About Natural Resources and Civil War?  Fearon and Laitin. 2003. Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War  Tsuma, “Climate Change – Conflict Nexus”  Leroy and Gebresenbet, “Climate Conflicts in the Horn of Africa”  Stewart, “Horizontal inequalities as a Cause of Conflict” (pages 1-28)  (recommended)  Hsiang et al. “Quantifying the Influence of Climate Change on Conflict”  Collier and Hoefller. 2003. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War”  Keen. 2012. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War” |
| 18 March | Ontology of Violence: War and the Negative/Liberal Peace | Richards, Chapters 1-4  Keen, “War and Peace”  Uvin, Chapter 1 and 3  Steenkamp, “In the Shadows of War and Peace: making sense of violence after peace accords” |

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| 1 April | Youth, Gender and War  Literature review due | Uvin, Chapter 2  Singer, “Addressing the Global Challenges of Child Soldiers”  Blattman and Annan, “On the Nature and Causes of LRA Abduction”  Blattman, et al. “Consequences of Child Soldiering”  Human Rights Watch, “ ‘My Heart is Cut’: Sexual Violence by Rebels and Pro-Government Forces in Côte d’Ivoire” (Skim pages 21- 86)  Chun and Skjelsbaek, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict”  Wood, “Variation in Sexual Violence During War”  McKay, “The Effects of Armed Conflict on Girls and Women”   * ~~Ben-Ari and Harsch, “Sexual Violence, an Invisible War Crime”~~ |
| 8 April | Intervention and Third Party Practice: Peacemaking | Darby and MacGinty, chs: Introduction, 2,3,5,7-9,11 |
| 15 April | Intervention and Third Party Practice: Peacemaking / Peacebuilding | Darby and MacGinty, chs: 14-17  Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo*, chs: 1,2 |
| 22 April | Intervention and Third Party Practice: Peacebuilding | Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo*, chs: 3-6  Cilliers and Schunemann, “The Future of Intrastate Conflict in Africa” |
| 29 April | Seminar paper due |  |
| 6 May | Final discussion |  |
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*DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities with reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA).  Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Student Disability Services for further information on how to receive accommodations and support.  Student Disability Services is located at 101 E. Seminary St., 765-658-6267.*

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**Academic Integrity Policy (Please read this section carefully)**

From the Academic Handbook. If you have any questions about any of this, please see me and/or consult the [**handbook**](http://www.depauw.edu/univ/handbooks/dpuhandbookprint.asp?indexnum=506.03) for more information.

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Academic integrity refers to the ethical standards and policies that govern how people work and interact in the academic enterprise at a college or university. These standards and policies attempt to do more than define and condemn what is wrong or unethical; they also attempt to provide a foundation for the mutual trust and individual responsibility necessary in a healthy academic community.

Almost all the types of academic dishonesty described below have to do with working with others or using the work of others. This is not to suggest that working with others or using their work is wrong. Indeed, the heart of the academic enterprise, learning itself, is based on using the ideas of others to stimulate and develop your own. In this sense, all academic work is collaboration, and therefore academic integrity focuses on those acts that demean or invalidate fruitful collaboration.

**B.  Types of Academic Dishonesty**

**Cheating.** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials in any academic exercise or having someone else do work for you. Examples of cheating include looking at another student’s paper during a test, bringing an answer sheet to a test, obtaining a copy of a test prior to the test date or submitting homework borrowed from another student.

**Fabrication.** Inventing or falsifying information. Examples of fabrication include inventing data for an experiment you did not do or did not do correctly or making reference to sources you did not use in a research paper.

**Facilitating academic dishonesty.** Helping someone else to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes giving someone a paper or homework to copy from or allowing someone to cheat from your test paper.

**Plagiarism.** Using the words or ideas of another writer without attribution, so that they seem as if they are your own. Plagiarism ranges from copying someone else’s work word for word, to rewriting someone else’s work with only minor word changes (mosaic plagiarism), to summarizing work without acknowledging the source. (See the [Writing Center Guide to Documentation and Plagiarism](http://www.depauw.edu/admin/arc/writing_center/plag.asp) for further information on plagiarism.)

**Multiple submission.** Submitting work you have done in previous classes as if it were new and original work. Although professors may occasionally be willing to let you use previous work as the basis of new work, they expect you to do new work for each class. Students seeking to submit a piece of work to more than one class must have the written permission of both instructors.

**Abuse of academic materials.** Harming, appropriating or disabling academic resources so that others cannot use them. This includes cutting tables and illustrations out of books to use in a paper, stealing books or articles and deleting or damaging computer files intended for others’ use.

**Deception and misrepresentation.** Lying about or misrepresenting your work, academic records or credentials. Examples of deception and misrepresentation include forging signatures, forging letters of recommendation and falsifying credentials in an application. Of particular concern, given the current popularity of collaborative projects, is taking credit for group work to which you did not contribute significantly or meet your obligations. In a collaborative project, all members of the group are expected to do their share. Group members may work together on each phase of the project or they may divide the tasks--one person might do background research; another might take charge of the lab experiments; another might be responsible for drafting the report. Even in a modular project, however, each member of the group is responsible for being familiar and involved with the entire project. Be sure to get clear instructions on your individual and collective responsibilities from each faculty member for each course.

**Electronic dishonesty.** Using network access inappropriately, in a way that affects a class or other students’ academic work. Examples of electronic dishonesty include using someone else’s authorized computer account to send and receive messages, breaking into someone else’s files, gaining access to restricted files, disabling others’ access to network systems or files, knowingly spreading a computer virus or obtaining a computer account under false pretenses.

**Carelessness.** When does carelessness become dishonesty? Students sometimes make minor mistakes in completing academic assignments. Mistyping one of many endnotes in a long paper, for example, may in most cases be considered a careless mistake, rather than an act of deliberate dishonesty.

When students make multiple mistakes in acknowledging sources, however, these mistakes cannot be considered simply careless. Students who copy long passages from a book or a Web source, for example, make a deliberate choice to do so. Such students have taken a short cut; instead of explaining the source of their ideas, they have simply stolen ideas from others. In such cases, carelessness is a form of dishonesty.

Students are responsible for knowing the academic integrity policy and may not use ignorance of the policy as an excuse for dishonesty.