ECS 5110 - HISTORY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
Winter 2013; Monday 17:30-20:30

Professor: Jean-François Rioux

Office Hours: Monday 10:00-12:00 / Office: Guigues 320  
Tel: 236-1393 #2388 / jfrioux@ustpaul.ca

DESCRIPTION

It is a cliché to state that history is more than a sum of wars and battles. The problem is that, while there are many sources devoted to the history of war and violence, there is not much literature on the history of peaceful conflict resolution.

In this course, we shall study the creation of procedures and institutions that do not directly rely on force and coercion in the settlement of disputes. This survey will be quite wide, as it will span the peaceful resolution of differences within bands and chiefdoms, ancient and medieval societies, absolutist states, and contemporary democracies.

Although we will learn much about dialogue and negotiation, third party processes and the cultural norms that favour peace, the history of conflict resolution cannot be divorced from the history of the formal institutions that play a part in the settlement and management of conflict, namely political regimes and laws. For example, the emergence of bureaucratic states has historically marginalized traditional peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms in the West. It is only with the rise of the complex, prosperous, and individualized societies of the late twentieth century that peaceful conflict resolution has come back in style in Europe and the Americas.

This course has also the objective of understanding where the discipline of conflict resolution originates from, and where it may be going to. Many people are familiar with the practices of negotiation, mediation and arbitration, but less so about the historical development of the theories and rules that govern these endeavours.

The course will be divided in three parts: 1) old societies; 2) Western modernization; 3) contemporary issues and cases. The third section will be the longest one. The emphasis in this course will be on Western institutions and processes, simply because this is what the professor knows best. However, examples from non-Western contexts will also be discussed in several instances.
FORMAT

The professor will teach for about 90 minutes each week. The remaining time will be devoted to roundtable discussions. The evaluation will consist of two medium-length essays, a short reading report, a final exam, and participation marks.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 7  INTRODUCTION
The role of the historical perspective / Grand narratives of conflict resolution / Description of the course / Objectives and limitations / Organization and documentation issues

FIRST PART: OLD TIME CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Jan. 14  ARCHAIC SOCIETIES: TROUBLESHOOTING IN ARCADIA
Controversies about conflict in anthropology / Traditional modes of conflict resolution / Very peaceful and very violent societies
Discussion topic: Can we learn about conflict resolution from primitive societies?


Jan. 21  ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: DO AS THE ROMANS DO?
The emergence of monarchies in the Middle East and Asia / Greek cities / Republican and imperial Rome / Roman law / Byzantium
Discussion topic: How is conflict resolution performed in authoritarian and oligarchic systems?

Jan. 28  THE WESTERN MIDDLE AGES: WHO’S IN CHARGE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION?
The Germanic Kingdoms / Canon law, common law, and civil Law / Church and state / Kings and barons / Feudalism / The management of cities
**Discussion topic:** Is conflict resolution possible in a fragmented system with overlapping claims and jurisdictions like the medieval world?

SECOND PART: WESTERN MODERNITY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Feb. 4  THE RISE OF THE STATE: LEVIATHAN AS THE GREAT CONFLICT RESOLVER
Legal codification / Royal absolutism / The decline of private violence / Bureaucracy and the management of conflict / The Civilizing process
**Discussion topic:** Is the modern state the ultimate conflict resolution mechanism?

Feb. 11  THE LIBERAL- DEMOCRATIC POLITIC: MY RIGHTS VS YOUR POWER IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION
Democratic revolutions / Human rights / Constitutionalism / Popular sovereignty / Democratic peace
**Discussion topic:** Is liberal democracy mostly a conflict resolution system?

Feb. 18  Reading Week

Feb. 25  INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY: DEVELOPING THE CRAFT
Emergence of modern diplomacy / International law / International third parties / International organizations
**Discussion topic:** Can international relations be significantly submitted to peaceful conflict resolution?

**THIRD PART: SELECTED TOPICS IN RECENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**March 4**

**THE SETTLEMENT OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS: THE PROMETHEAN TASK**

Peace talks / Peace agreements / Peace keeping and peace enforcement / Reconstruction / Peacebuilding / Human security

*Discussion topic: Have the conflict resolution methods introduced since 1945 been useful in the resolution of armed conflicts?*


**March 11**

**LABOUR RELATIONS: CLASS STRUGGLE OR RECONCILIATION?**

Trade unionism / Scientific management of labour / The humanist school / Collective bargaining / Current approaches

*Discussion topic: What is the role of conflict resolution in Western labour relations?*


**March 18**

**TRADITIONS AND MODERNITY IN NON-WESTERN SOCIETIES: IS A SYNTHESIS POSSIBLE?**

The role of customary conflict resolution in modernizing societies / India / Middle East / Africa / Southeast Asia

*Discussion topic: What are the advantages and limitations of traditional conflict resolution in the globalized world?*

March 25

THE CHINESE CASE: CAN A.D.R. LIMIT EMPOWERMENT?
Evolution of Chinese conflict resolution / Law and ADR in China / The CR Pagoda

Discussion Topic: Can Alternative Conflict Resolution be an Instrument of Control for Political Authorities?


April 1st

Easter Monday; No class

April 8

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AS A DISCIPLINE AND A PROFESSION: MIRAGE OR REALITY?
Science and conflict resolution / The emergence of conflict resolution as a discipline? / The uneven professionalization of conflict resolution

Discussion topic: Is conflict resolution a discipline and a profession?

EVALUATION

Essays I and II (25% + 25% = 50%)

There will be two medium-sized essays (8-10 pages) to submit for the course. The first one must be about a topic from part I or II of the course, and the second one about part III. Students must use at least five sources, one of which can be from the reading list.

There are three options for the essays:

a) Literature Review: A summary, analysis, and discussion of sources mentioning CR about a given period and place.
b) Case Study: A short analysis of a specific instance of peaceful conflict resolution.
c) Analysis of a Process or Institution: A short overview of a CR process or institution typical of a particular era or civilisation.

First essay: Feb. 25
Second Essay: April 8

Reading report (10%)

Every student will have to present to the class a short summary (5-10 minutes) of one of the compulsory readings, with comments and/or questions. A short point form version should be handed to the professor.

Final Exam (30%)

A final exam will take place during the official examination period, probably on April 22. It will involve writing long answers to broadly worded questions.

Participation (10%)

The participation marks will be based on attendance, frequency of contribution to discussions and on quality of contributions.