

Youth & Conflict - Fall 2016
CONF 399 Section 002 / CONF 695 Section 002

Class Time: Monday 10:30 am – 1:10 pm

Location: Robinson Hall A208

Instructor: Patricia A Maulden, Ph.D.
Northeast Module II, Room 106
703.993.9804
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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description & Objectives

Welcome! This course explores aspects of youth in terms of categorization, context, dynamics at the local, regional, and global levels, and interactions with violence and peace. Youth can be much more than just a distinct life phase or political category as the readings will attest. Throughout the semester we will challenge the boundaries of how we understand the considerations and constraints of the transition to adulthood. The primary objectives of the course are: (1) to develop a better understanding of the generational and gendered dynamics of conflict and peace; and (2) to situate youth contextually – socially, culturally, economically, and politically; (3) to explore impacts of gender, age, context upon youth individually and as well as within constituent groups; (4) to incorporate youth into the theoretical and practical maps of conflict analysis and resolution.

As this course is designed for a combination of undergraduate and graduate students assignments will reflect appropriate expectations for each group. In class discussions, however, both student groups will be expected to engage in interactions as part of a unified community of scholars exploring the nexus of youth, conflict, and peace.

During the course class participants will:

- * Gain a better understanding of child and youth development trajectories and the role of agency in the social actions of youth.
- * Examine generational power dynamics and the gendered aspects of child and youth participation in conflict and peace.
- * Explore youth gang activities, child/youth soldiering, ‘radicalization,’ constructing a typology of conflict participation.
- * Explore youth activism and the involvement of children and youth in peacebuilding or peacemaking projects.
- * Integrate course topics into the larger framework of conflict analysis and resolution theories and practices.

Course Expectations

1. Consistent attendance. Barring exceptional circumstances, you will be expected to attend class.
2. Effective preparation. You are expected to come to class having read all of the week's reading assignments. The class is set up in a seminar format and involves discussion and activities that depend on advance preparation.
3. Classroom etiquette. Please come to class on time and prepared. Cell phones should not be visible during class discussion. You may use computers/tablets only to take notes and when you do it is with the understanding that no email or other internet activities will occur unless forming part of the in-class work that day.
4. Course completion. In keeping with departmental policy, incomplete grades will be given only in cases of illness, either personal or in an immediate family member. Class assignments that are submitted late will be penalized. If a student has a documented emergency, special arrangements may be made with the instructor.
5. Paper format. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, have 1" margins, and Times New Roman 12-point font. The pages should be numbered and stapled together. Edit your papers carefully as spelling and grammatical errors will lower your overall score. Chicago or Harvard citation styles are preferred.

Course Materials

Required Texts

Anderson, Elijah. 1999. *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Fader, Jamie J. 2013. *Falling Back: Incarceration and Transitions to Adulthood Among Urban Youth*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Honwana, Alcinda. 2013. *Youth and Revolution in Tunisia*. London: Zed Books.

Taft, Jessica K. 2011. *Rebel Girls: Youth Activism and Social Change Across the Americas*. New York: New York University Press.

Required Articles (Available on Blackboard)

Courville, Sasha and Nicola Piper. 2004. Harnessing Hope Through NGO Activism. In *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 592(39-61).

Damon, William. 2004. What Is Positive Youth Development? In *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 591(13-24).

Fergus, Stevenson and Marc A. Zimmerman. 2005. Adolescent Resilience: A Framework for Understanding Healthy Development in the Face of Risk. In *Annual Review of Public Health*. Vol. 26(399-419).

King, Nathaniel. 2007. Conflict as Integration: Youth Aspiration to Personhood in the Teleology of Sierra Leone's 'Senseless War.' *In Current African Issues*. No. 36. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala University.

Ness, Cindy D. 2004. Why Girls Fight: Female Youth Violence in the Inner City. *In Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 595(32-48).

Picart, Caroline Joan S. 2015. "Jihad Cool/Jihad Chic": The Roles of the Internet and Imagined Relations in the Self-Radicalization of Colleen LaRose (Jihad Jane). *In Societies*, Vol. 5(354-383).

Utas, Mats. 2005. Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone. *In Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 78(403-430).

Academic Policies & Information

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with 4 electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt, please ask for guidance and clarification.

GMU E-MAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing "MEMO" system or a new "MASONLIVE" account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information. It will not be possible to contact you through another email account, and you should check your email for important course, S-CAR, and Mason information.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES

- Writing Center: <http://writing.center.gmu.edu> – Robinson Hall A114 (703.993.1200)
- Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu/> (703.993.2380)
- University Library: “Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>; Mary Oberlies is S-CAR’s liaison librarian and can be contacted at moberlie@gmu.edu.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu> is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

S-CAR hosts a variety of activities during the semester, such as films, talks, seminars, and social events. You are encouraged to attend these and to offer reflections on them in class and/or on our Blackboard site.

Assignments

Participation 20%

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to engage in working group activities. Active participation based on thoughtful consideration of the reading materials is expected. If you do not attend you cannot participate.

Essay Assignments 60%

Each of the 3 short essay assignments is worth 20% of your course grade. Essay prompts will be distributed throughout the semester as indicated in the Assignments section.

Final Video Assignment 20%

In lieu of a paper, each student will upload a 15 to 20 minutes video to the class YouTube channel. A prompt will be handed out with instructions and the assignment will be discussed throughout the semester. **The video needs to be uploaded by Sunday, December 11.**

Course Agenda

Part I. Conceptualizing Youth in Conflict & Peace

August 29	Introduction to course concepts
September 5	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS
September 12	Articles: Damon, Fergus & Zimmerman, Courville & Piper
September 19	Articles: Ness, King, Picart, Utas <i>Essay I Prompt Distributed</i>

Part II. Urban Impacts, Incarceration, Reentry

September 26	Anderson Introduction through Chapter 4
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October 3 Anderson Chapter 5 through Conclusion
Essay 1 Due in Class

October 11 (Tuesday) Fader Introduction through Chapter 4

October 16 Fader Chapters 5 through Conclusion
Essay 2 Prompt Distributed

Part III. Youth Activism

October 24 Taft Introduction through Chapter 4

October 31 Taft Chapter 5 through Conclusion
Essay 2 Due in Class

November 7 Honwana Introduction through Chapter 4

November 14 Honwana Chapter 5 through Conclusion
Essay 3 Prompt Distributed

Part V. Integration

November 21 Synthesis I

November 28 Synthesis II
Essay 3 Due Via Email (pmaulden@gmu.edu)

December 5 Individual Video Project Work

Final Video Assignment – Due Sunday, December 11

Points Accumulated	Letter Grade
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
60-69	D
0-59	F