

SOP77041 — Theories of Conflict

Module Information	
Module Code	SOP77041
Module Title	Theories of Conflict
Department	Sociology
Year Group	MPhil in Race, Ethnicity and Conflict
Module Personnel	Dr Roderick Condon
Academic Year	2026-27
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 1
Contact Hours	1 seminar per week (2 hours)

Module Content	
Module Description	This module examines conflict from a sociological perspective through a consideration of key theories and substantive themes.
Module Learning Aims	This module aims to enable students to perceive deeper societal processes underlying empirical events. The module starts from the frame of Marxist theory, as the basis of conflict theory in sociology, honing in on the key insight of social conflicts being structurally anchored and bound to wider societal dynamics. This is juxtaposed to the perspective of ethnic conflict that is the focus of peace and conflict studies. From this initial foundation, the module expands to explore key themes such as: capitalism, racial capitalism, and colonialism; imperialism/empire; ethnicity and nationalism; violence and resistance. In approaching these themes, the module will bring particular focus to The Troubles and subsequent Irish/British peace process as a core case study.
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module students should be able to: Understand the central assumptions, perspectives, and problems of conflict theory as well as deploy it in social analysis

Module Content

	• Critically unpack the notion that conflict is produced by identity/difference with a view towards the underlying violence in the unfolding of capitalist modernity in Europe and its projection onto the rest of the world through colonialism • Think deeply and critically about violence and be able to both differentiate and relate its various forms • Understand The Troubles and Irish/British peace process and other case studies from this perspective • Recognize the need for social science to be reflexive and critical.
Indicative Reading / Resources	Selected readings will be provided each week. The following short book is recommended for background information on The Troubles (available as ebook from Trinity library): • Finn D. (2019) <i>One Man's Terrorist: A Political History of the IRA</i>. London: Verso. [see, in particular: Introduction, ch1&2, and Epilogue]

Assessment

Assessment Components	Written Assignment (80%), Presentation (20%)
Assessment Details	

Additional Information

Prerequisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Any other information	