

SEMINAR

The Law on Violence and the Violence of the Law
(From a book in progress)**Barry Weisberg***Visiting Fellow, Centre for Comparative and Public Law***Thursday, 22 November 2012, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm**
Room AO724, 7/F Cheng Yu Tung Tower
The University of Hong Kong

The seminar will present current work on a book about Comparative Law in the BRIC countries (Brazil, China, India, South Africa, Russia), plus Nigeria and the United States. The two central issues for comparison are the Rule of Law, and the Violence of Law and the Law of Violence. The Violence of Law refers to the way in which the social order, legal tradition and legal system define and punish “violence.” The Law of Violence refers to the legal and extra legal violence produced by the law: What has been called a “field of pain and death.” This is symbolized in the image of the blindfolded lady justice, which always contains a sword. It is argued that the while the aim of the law has been to minimize violence, it has become, in many countries, an instrument to increase violence. In this talk, the speaker will explore some of the implications of this contradiction.

Barry Weisberg is an activist, lecturer, teacher and scholar based in the United States and Hong Kong, and has been recognized in the International Whose Who. He was a leader in the 1960’s Civil Rights Movement, the opposition to the US War in Indochina, the first US workers national strike for health and safety, and the movement to safeguard the environment. He is credited with originating the concept of Ecocide and pioneering the recent concern for megacities and global cities. He served as a consultant to three United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and as a Special Reporter on Criminal Justice for the American Bar Association. In the latter capacity he addressed the issue of what constitutes “doing justice.” Weisberg is a co-founder of the Chicago Build the Peace Committee, the Global Cities Commentator for Chicago Public Radio in Hong Kong and considered one of the world’s leading authorities on global violence and peace building. He has traveled to nearly half the countries of the world and was first invited to China in 1971.

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