

Nonviolence In Action

RCSSci 360 Section 2 Winter, 2003

Dr. Helen Fox

Fulfills the Advanced Writing in the Disciplines (AWD) Requirement

Office Hours by appointment in 1128 Angell Hall, or 120 Tyler,

or in various coffee shops

Required Reading (Books are available at Shaman Drum or at www.powells.com (where you can sometimes get a good used copy)

Course pack (available at Ulrich's)

Ackerman, Peter and Duvall, Jack. (2000) *A Force More Powerful*. New York: Palgrave

H.H. Dalai Lama (1999) *Ethics for a New Millennium* New York: Putnam

Hanh, Thich Nhat (1993) *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change*

Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Gish, Arthur G. (2001) *Hebron Journal: Stories of Nonviolent Peacemaking*. Scottsdale,

PA: Herald Press.

Books about War, Peace, and/or "Human Nature" (your choice of one)

Easwaran, Eknath (1999) *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, A Man to Match His Mountains*. Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press

Gourevitch, Philip (1998) *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories From Rwanda*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Hochschild, Adam (1994) *The Unquiet Ghost: Russians Remember Stalin*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

Patchett, Ann (2001) *Bel Canto*. (2001) New York: HarperCollins.

Wolff, Tobias (1994) *In Pharaoh's Army*. New York: Vintage Books.

Yoshimura, Akito (1978) (2001) *One Man's Justice*. New York: Harcourt, Inc.

Introduction

Over the past hundred years, nonviolent action by ordinary people has accomplished massive social change, toppling dictators, overthrowing colonial governments, ending participation in unjust wars, rewriting oppressive laws, reconciling victims and perpetrators, and healing families and communities. Nonviolent action requires leadership, intelligence, creativity, moral and physical courage, self discipline, and brilliant strategy. Why then, do so many people believe that a nonviolent response to injustice or attack is unworkable, or "too idealistic"? Every major religion: Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Judaism, councils its followers to sanctify human life and treat all human beings as family. Why, then, do we continue to train young people to kill, maim, and terrorize others? Why do we support a military budget that is three times that of our major adversaries combined? Why do we call our country's aggression "just" and "noble," and our enemies' aggression "unjust," "mindless," and "evil"? Why do we caricature and dehumanize people of other races as a prelude to our aggression against them? Why are we so reluctant to investigate the root causes of violence: poverty, oppression, ignorance, and fear?

This course focuses on powerful, nonviolent strategies that have been used successfully by people all over the world to respond to global and local conflicts. Its purpose is to convince you (and through you, others) that nonviolence works, and to encourage you get involved in nonviolent action in your communities and your personal life. Through readings, videos, short, informal (but frequent) writing assignments, small group discussions, guest speakers, and student-initiated community action projects, you will become acquainted with various philosophies of nonviolence, examine case studies of strategic nonviolent action, learn ways to respond to arguments that justify war and aggression, practice nonviolent strategies, and link up with local peace and reconciliation groups for training, inspiration, and activism.

Course Goals

- to understand some of the philosophies that motivate nonviolent action, including tenets of five major religions
- to learn how nonviolent social movements have worked in countries around the world
- to learn and practice some of the methods and strategies of nonviolent action
- to learn to respond to arguments that justify war and aggression
- to practice nonviolent action in the community, teach peace, and/or contribute to a nonviolent social movement

Writing

- Weekly reading journal giving your thoughts on specific questions or issues raised in the texts (2-3 pages). Please organize your thoughts before writing, make your ideas clear, use a personal voice (“I think, I wonder, This makes me think about...etc.”), and edit carefully.
- Reaction papers. From time to time I will assign short response papers after a particularly rich (or inconclusive) discussion, a video, a visitor, etc. (1-2 pages)
- Letter to a character or author of the book you chose: “What I’ve learned from you about war and peace, and questions that remain.” (4-5 pages)
- Dialogue with an adversary about the power of nonviolence (5-7 pp in two or more drafts)
- Write-up of your community action project (explanation and analysis of what you did, what the challenges were, how you dealt with them, and how the project could be improved) (4 or more pages).

Assessment of writing assignments

Your writing assignments will not be graded; I feel that grades often stifle the critical thinking, creativity and risk-taking that are necessary to the writing process. I will mark your reading journals with ++ (you’ve impressed me); + (okay, but some deeper thinking, more accurate editing, and/or significant details would improve it); or RW – a mandatory re-write after careful consideration of my comments and an individual writing conference if we both think it would be helpful. You may endlessly revise (and I will endlessly comment on) any or all of the assignments.

Portfolio Assessment

You are responsible for organizing all of your written work, including all drafts of your major writing assignments, reading journals, and reaction papers in a binder or cardboard folder and handing it in on the last day of class. It is UP TO YOU to KEEP A RECORD of all topics as they are assigned and to make sure they are all included in the final portfolio.

Community Action

In small groups, you will decide on nonviolent action projects you want to pursue in the community. This might involve a specific project with the UM student organization Anti-War Action, **internships** with the Ann Arbor Area Committee for Peace or other peace groups, **peace education** of children or teens in schools or religious institutions, training and practice in **nonviolent dialogue or conflict resolution**, or other appropriate ways of learning and practicing nonviolent action.

Grading

Your grade or RC evaluation will be based on the quality and depth of your writing, your attendance and involvement in class, and your contributions to your community project.

Because all classes are discussion-intensive and practical, attendance is a must.

More than two absences will result in a significant lowering of your grade.

CALENDAR (Tentative and subject to change, depending on the world situation and students' interests and needs)

Week 1 (Jan 7) War and threat of war: The current world situation.

Week Two (Jan. 14) The problems of war. Just and unjust war.

Week Three (Jan. 21). What is nonviolent action? Start community projects. MLK Day activity of your choice Choose your book about war, peace, and/or human nature (see list) and start reading.

Week Four (Jan. 28) What do the five major religions say about nonviolence? (Visitors)

Week Five (Feb.4) Religions, cont.. First draft: "Letter to author or character" DUE.

Week Six (Feb. 11) Case Studies: India, Chile (videos: India : *Defying the Crown*; Chile: *Defeat of a Dictator*)

Week Seven (Feb. 18) Case Studies: United States (videos: African Americans: *No Easy Walk*; Chicanos: *Struggle in the Fields*)

Spring Break

Week Eight (Mar. 4) Case Studies: Poland, South Africa (videos: Poland: *We've Caught God By The Arm*; South Africa: *Freedom in Our Lifetime*)

Week Nine (Mar. 11) Nonviolent Methods and Peacemaking Experiences (Visitors)

Week Ten (Mar. 18) Nonviolent Methods and Peacemaking Experiences. First draft: "Dialogue" DUE.

Week Eleven (Mar. 25) Conscientious Objectors: US draftees and Israeli Refuseniks. (Visitors) and/or Students' choice of topic.

Week Twelve (Apr. 1) Students' choice of topic. Write-up of community project DUE.

Week Thirteen (Apr. 8) Student reports from community projects

Week Fourteen (April 15) What Next? Final Brunch

Readings in Order (* means reading is in a required book; all others in course pack)

- *HH Dalai Lama: Universal Responsibility (Ch. 11 In: Ethics for a New Millennium)
- Cartoon on Germ Warfare
- Boston Globe: Annan, Teens, Rebuke Grown-ups for Strife
- Lafeber: International Enough Day
- Fox: A Radical Practice of Love
- C.K. Williams: Fear
- Berry: Thoughts in the Presence of Fear
- Bartlett: EMI-D Ground Zero for Peace
- Kucinich: Peace
- War Resisters League: A War Without End?
- Baraka: Somebody Blew Up America
- Wimsatt: Inside the Union Square Vigil
- Zunes: Ten Things To Know About US Policy in the Middle East
- Guardian: We Won't Deny Our Consciences
- Boston Globe: Cartoon on International Court
- Kucinich: Peace and Nuclear Disarmament
- War Resisters League: US Bombs Kill 4000 Afghan Civilians
- Randall: Why is the US Media Blacking Out Documentary on War Crimes?"
- Roy: War Is Peace (In: Zinn)
- Herold: Counting the Dead
- Ann Arbor Ad Hoc Committee for Peace: Iraq: A War We Don't Need to Fight
- *Mosley: Baghdad After the War (In: Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Nagy: The Secret Behind the Sanctions
- Fox: We're Complicit to Terror by our Silence on Iraq (Ann Arbor News)
- Zinn: Just and Unjust War
- War Resisters League: Where Your Money Really Goes
- FCNL: A Wasteful, Bloated Military Budget
- FCNL Washington Newsletter: In God We Trust?
- Kessler and Slevin: Preemptive Strikes Must Be Decisive
- Bennet: In Israeli Hospital, Bomber Tells of Trying to Kill Israelis
- *Yoors-Peters: Daring to be Human (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Letter from Ramsey Clark
- Bookman: The President's Real Goal in Iraq
- Amnesty International Press Release
- Sanger and Schmitt: US Has a Plan To Occupy Iraq
- US Conference of Catholic Bishops: Statement on Iraq
- *HH Dalai Lama: The Supreme Emotion (Ch. 5 In: Ethics for a New Millennium)
- Sharp: Disregarded History
- *Ackerman and Duvall: Introduction In: A Force More Powerful
- Kidder: The Candle and the Closet
- Boulding: Nonviolence and Power in the Twentieth Century (In Zunes, Kurtz and Asher)

- Chatfield: Nonviolent Social Movements in the United States (In Zunes, et al)
- Emerson: from “War” (1885) (In: Zinn)
- *HH Dalai Lama: Peace and Disarmament (Ch.14 In: Ethics for a New Millennium)
- Buddha: Let Man Overcome Anger By Love (520 B.C.) (In Zinn: Power of Nonviolence)
- *HH Dalai Lama: Role of Religion in Modern Society (Ch.15 In: Ethics for a New Millennium)
- Sunim: War is Bad Karma
- *Hanh: Ch 1 In: Love in Action
- *Hanh: Our Green Garden (Ch. 3 In: Love In Action)
- *Hanh: Ahimsa: The Path of Harmlessness (Ch. 4 in Love in Action)
- *Hanh: A Peaceful Heart (Ch.5 In: Love In Action)
- *Merton: Blessed Are The Meek (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Merton: The Root of War Is Fear (In Zinn)
- *Niemoeller: The Way of Peace (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Tolstoy: Repent Ye, For the Kingdom of Heaven Is At Hand (on-line) Conclusion From: The Kingdom of God Is Within You.
- Fellowship of Reconciliation: Judaism: Fixing the World
- Pargaman: Peace is Around the Corner
- *Friedman: Hasidism and the Love of Enemies (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- *Friedman: Martin Buber and the Covenant of Peace (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Henthoff: Children Build Peace at Circus
- AFSC: Introduction to Islam
- Muhaiyaddeen: Jihad: The Holy War Within
- Muhaiyaddeen: Laws of Holy War
- Yasin: My American Jihad
- Dalton: Satyagraha vs Duragraha: Power and Its Abuses
- * MK Gandhi: How to Stop Aggressors (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- * MK Gandhi: Nonviolence: The Greatest Force (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Indrah’s Web
- *Ackerman and Duvall: A Force More Powerful. Ch. 2 India: Movement for Self-Rule
- *Ackerman and Duvall: A Force More Powerful. Ch 7 Argentina and Chile: Resisting Repression
- *King: My Pilgrimage to Nonviolence (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Halberstam: The Children (Prologue)
- *Ackerman and Duvall: A Force More Powerful: Ch. 8 The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights
- King: Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam (In Zinn)
- *Cesar Chavez: People Are Willing To Sacrifice Themselves (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- *Ackerman and Duvall: A Force More Powerful: Ch. 3 Poland: Power from Solidarity

- *Ackerman and Duvall: A Force More Powerful: Ch. 9 South Africa: Campaign Against Apartheid
- * Muste: The Pacifist Way of Life (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Mideast Action
- Wink: Readings for Reflection: The Myth of Redemptive Violence
- *Gish: Hebron Journal (Introduction 15-19 and 241-285)
- Zagajewski: Try to Praise the Mutilated World
- New York Times: Deep in Poverty in Colombia (photo)
- Ruben: Letter from Quito
- huwaidaa: Successful non-violent action
- Women's Interfaith Encounter Transforms Nazareth Hotel
- Gilbert: Courage To Refuse: Frequently Asked Questions
- Seniors Letter to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon
- Brooke: People to People Diplomacy on a Japanese Ship
- India: Women Leaders Vow to Stop Spread of Gujarat Pogrom
- Stockman: Opposition to Iraq Takes Rise via the Net
- Hanh: What I Would Say to Osama Bin Laden
- McAllister: You Can't Kill the Spirit (In: Zunes et al)
- Gettleman: Nobel Peace Prize
- Lewin: Seeds of Protest Grow on College Campuses
- Albert and Shalom: Ten Q and A
- *Boulding: Envisioning the Peaceable Kingdom (In Wink: Peace Is The Way)
- Khan: To Keep the Peace, Study Peace
- *HH Dalai Lama: An Appeal (Ch. 16 In: Ethics for a New Millennium)
- Peace Pledge

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