

Peace and Conflict Studies “164C”

“Brothers and sisters, never war, never war! Everything is lost with war, nothing is lost with peace. Never more war.” Pope Francis

This experimental course will be taught to a select group at the Metta Center and online for anyone interested. It will draw upon the basic material from the popular UC, Berkeley one-year course I taught for many years, “The Theory and Practice of Nonviolence” (available on the web) considerably updated in the light of the many nonviolent struggles that have unfolded in our rapidly changing world (and what I have learned since). Participants should leave this eight-week seminar with a good grasp of what nonviolence is and how to use it, including in their own lives. There will be no “work” (i.e., exams or papers – unless you want to submit one) outside of background reading and participation. The course is not affiliated with – or constrained by – any institution other than Metta. “Tuition” will be in the form of anything you’d like to volunteer or offer.

Course Outline

1. Aug. 30 “Paradigm Shift,” or, The Great Turning. Why are so many people searching for a – or *the* – “new story”? What is it, where to find it, and what does nonviolence have to do with it (hint: everything).

2. Sept. 6 What is Nonviolence? How to think about it, how to identify a NV event. How to evaluate its episodes or campaigns. Why we use the word “principled” to describe the type of NV we’ll be studying here. Overview of the history, theory, and dynamics of what Gandhi called “the greatest force mankind has been endowed with.”

3. Sept. 13 Select episodes from the history of nonviolence, leading up to Gandhi. (Somewhat) NV societies: Quakers, indigenous groups, etc. What is “nature” and what is “culture” in the evolution of NV.

4. Sept. 20 Gandhi’s great campaigns: South Africa and India: the highlights, and what they can teach us.

5. Sept. 27 “Constructive Programme” (CP), then and now. Why CP is such an important element in NV struggle. What would be the charkha of today? Gandhian economics in brief. The Wheel of NV, and how to adapt it today.

6. Oct. 4 Civil rights in America, and some parallel struggles; “color revolutions” and Arab Spring.

7. Oct. 11 The evolution of NV since Gandhi & King: what has changed, what hasn’t? What and how is humanity learning, and most importantly, where do we go from here? Roadmap and its implications.

8. Oct. 18 TBA! “Parking lot” issues and major conclusions.

Resources

* = highly recommended works

Films: (most are available on YouTube or elsewhere on the web)

* Sir Richard Attenborough, *Gandhi*
York and Zimmerman, *Where There is Hatred; Bringing Down a Dictator*
Teaching Tolerance, *A Time for Justice*
MST (Landless Workers Mvt.), *Raiz Forte*

Print:

* Eknath Easwaran, *Gandhi the Man*
* M.K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*
* Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom*
* Michael Nagler, *The Search for a Nonviolent Future*
_____, *The Nonviolence Handbook*
Rajmohan Gandhi, *Gandhi: the Man, His People, and the Empire*. (Another recommended biography is B. R. Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi* (full or abridged ed'n.)

Websites:

*www.mettacenter.org
wagingnonviolence.org