

NONVIOLENCE IN THE MODERN WORLD

HONORS 277

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This was offered as an undergraduate honors seminar (therefore with an enrollment cap of fifteen) not open to first year students. It met twice a week for 80 minutes each session during a fourteen week semester.

For more information on the intentions behind the course, see *Spotlight on Learning* in the *Religious Studies News*, spring 2000.

Despite the end of the Cold War, we live in a world that frequently seems to be growing more and more violent. Whether the news be from nearby homes and schools or from far-away countries, it is frequently news of violence and death. But violence can also be seen in more subtle forms, expressed through diet or economics.

Violence oftentimes is either caused or justified by religious teachings and practices. At the same time, religions have been the sources of profound critiques of violence, and of active resistance to the use of violence to resolve conflict.

In this course we will explore some of the ways in which the religious traditions of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Christianity have advocated the use of nonviolent means to effect personal transformation, to resolve social conflict, and to advance causes of social change. We will also look at advocates of nonviolence who have been suspicious of religion. We will look at the historical, philosophical, and theological foundations for nonviolence, and also at contemporary applications of nonviolence to solve social conflicts and address social injustice in the twentieth century.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Dennis Dalton, *Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action*

Staughton and Alice Lynd, *Nonviolence in America*

Thomas Merton (ed.), Gandhi on Non-Violence

The Dalai Lama, A Policy of Kindness

Thich Nhat Hanh, Interbeing

Walter Wink, Engaging the Powers

Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski, The Power of the People

Pam McAllister, This River of Courage

Reader of photocopied articles:

1. Gene Sharp, The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part One: Power and Struggle, "Nonviolent Action: An Active Technique of Struggle," 63-105.
2. Prem Suman Jain, "The Ethics of Jainism."
3. Padmanabh S. Jaini, "Indian Perspectives on the Spirituality of Animals."
4. Michael Tobias, Life Force, "The Genesis of Ahimsa," 45-59.
5. Surendra Bothara, Ahimsa: The Science of Peace, 14-26, 40-103.
6. Muni Shri Nagraj, The Anuvrat Ideology, "The Anuvrat Movement," 1-17.
7. S. L. Gandhi (ed.), Anuvrat Movement: A Constructive Endeavour Towards A Nonviolent Multicultural Society:
Acharya Tulsi, "Anuvrat: A Way to Reconciliation and Tolerance," 1-7.
Acharya Tulsi, "Anuvrat Code of Conduct: A Description of Various Vows," 10-14.
Yuvacharya Mahapragya, "The Anuvrat Movement in Retrospect," 15-27.

BOOKS ON LIBRARY RESERVE:

Kenneth Kraft (ed.), Inner Peace, World Peace

Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King (eds.), Engaged Buddhism

John R. Hinnells (ed.), A New Handbook of Living Religions

Other readings will be handed out in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Informed participation, presentations,
daily discussion papers, rapporteur reports: 50%
(see next page)

Research paper: 50%

(details and schedule will be handed out separately)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Since this is a seminar, much of the responsibility for the course rests with each of you individually, and with all of us collectively. Accordingly, 50% of the course grade will be based on the following factors.

- * Informed participation. This includes attendance, listening attentively to others, and engaging other seminar members in thoughtful discussion.
- * Daily discussion papers. These are described below.
- * 4 or 5 presentations during the course of the semester. See below.
- * Twice during the semester you will be called upon to summarize the previous class; see below for the rapporteur reports.

DAILY DISCUSSION PAPERS

For each class you will be responsible for a 1-2 page written paper in response to the required class readings or other assignments. These discussion papers will form a basis for classroom discussion of the material, and so are due in class on the day assigned. (The one exception is the rapporteur, who is excused from this assignment on the day of his or her report. The presenters are not excused from this assignment.)

You will be given general directions for some discussion papers in advance; for others it will be up to you to decide how to approach your response. These papers are an opportunity for you to engage the course material in ways that enable you to achieve greater clarity concerning your own thoughts. They are also an opportunity for you to engage in a conversation with the authors and with those about whom we are reading. There is no "right" or "wrong" response.

These assignments will be not be graded for either content or style, but I will make comments on them. If you hand in the paper in class, you will receive a grade of 4. If the paper is late for any reason, except those verified by a written note from Health Services or a Dean, you will receive a grade of 1. Late response papers will be accepted for one week only after the due date. If you do not hand in a paper, you will receive a grade of 0. If it is obvious that you have not done the assignment, and are handing in a paper based on nothing but your own ingenuity and imagination, in all likelihood you will receive a 0.

As a favor to me, I ask that you type the response papers; they may be single-spaced to conserve paper. This will serve two beneficial functions for you as well: by typing the papers, you will have an easily accessible record of your responses from throughout the semester; and you will learn the valuable skill of being able to compose a paper at the keyboard. Papers that are handwritten, however, will not be penalized.

PRESENTATIONS

For each class session, two of you will be responsible for introducing and reviewing issues, ideas, and questions related to the assigned readings. While the focus of the presentation should be on that session's readings, the presenter should make connections where relevant with previous readings. The purpose of the presentation is not to summarize the reading, since everyone should have read it, but to set the stage for the class discussion by providing ideas and questions, and highlighting problems or issues you think deserve further discussion. Your task is somehow to provoke your fellow classmates into thinking critically and creatively about the material.

The combined presentation of the two of you should last no more than 10 minutes. The two of you should meet in advance to plan your presentation. What is preferable is a Siskel and Ebert style presentation, in which the two of you work together to highlight areas of disagreement or which need further discussion to achieve greater clarity.

RAPPORTEUR

Twice during the semester each of you will be called upon to make a written and oral summary of the highlights of the previous class discussion. During the session on which you are reporting you will need to take good notes and be especially attentive to the twists and turns of the discussion. You should plan to write your report soon after the class session, while the discussion is still fresh in your mind. Your report, in addition to summarizing briefly the key points of the discussion, may include reminders of points to which we want or should return, areas and issues we did not cover in the discussion (either due to lack of time or oversight), and suggestions for new directions to head in our continued study of nonviolence. Since taking notes may well prevent you from entering into the discussion as much as you would have liked, you may include some of your own opinions in your report; but be sure to make clear when you are doing this.

Your report will take two forms:

- * You will make a 5 minute oral presentation at the start of the next class, in order to help build bridges between class sessions. Your oral presentation should not consist merely of you reading aloud what you've written.
- * You will hand in on the day of your report a 2-4 page written report. You must bring enough copies of this report so that there is one copy for each seminar participant. Your written report will be graded on an A-F scale.

GENERAL FORMAT OF EACH SESSION

- * Rapporteur's summary report (5 minutes)
- * Presentation (10 minutes)
- * Group discussion (55 minutes)
- * Housekeeping matters (10 minutes)

PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE

Introduction

Tuesday, September 2

Thursday, September 4

Lynds xi-xlvi

Sharp 63-101

Mahatma Gandhi

Tuesday, September 9

Dalton 1-62

Merton 1-34

Recommended: chapter on Hinduism in Hinnells (on reserve)

Thursday, September 11

Dalton 63-90

Merton 35-50

Tuesday, September 16

Dalton 91-167

Merton 51-76

Thursday, September 18

Dalton 188-200

Jainism

Tuesday, September 23

Prem Suman Jain (in reader)

Tobias (in reader)

Jaini (in reader)

Christopher Chapple in Kraft, 49-52 (on reserve)

Recommended: chapter on Jainism in Hinnells (on reserve)

Thursday, September 25

Bothara (in reader)

Tuesday, September 30

S. L. Gandhi (ed.) (in reader)

Nagraj (in reader)

Buddhism

Thursday, October 2

Robert A. F. Thurman in Kraft, 77-90 (on reserve)

José Ignacio Cabezón in Queen and King, 297-320 (on reserve)

Dalai Lama 9-25, 33-46, 108-130

Recommended: chapter on Buddhism in Hinnells (on reserve)

Tuesday, October 7

Dalai Lama 47-107

Thursday, October 9

King in Queen and King, 321-363 (on reserve)

Nhat Hanh 3-49

Tuesday, October 14

Nhat Hanh, 51-78

Thursday, October 16

Kraft in Kraft, 23-24 (on reserve)

Reading to be handed out in class

Christianity

Tuesday, October 21

Wink 175-208

Sermon on the Mount (to be handed out in class)

Recommended: chapter on Christianity in Hinnells (on reserve)

Thursday, October 23

Wink 209-257

America in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Tuesday, October 28

Lynds 1-12, 21-38

Cooney & Michalowski 14-37

Wednesday, October 30

Lynds 309-344

Cooney & Michalowski 85-87, 127

Reading to be handed out in class

Tuesday, November 4

Lynds 209-219, 252-267

Thursday, November 6

Lynds 220-251

Cooney & Michalowski 150-175

Dalton 168-87

Tuesday, November 11

Lynds 100-119, 161-163

Cooney & Michalowski 38-55, 74-107, skim 108-149

Thursday, November 13

Lynds 269-308, 477-492

Cooney & Michalowski 182-209, skim 210-245

Reading to be handed out in class

Tuesday, November 18

Cooney & Michalowski 56-61

McAllister 1-52, 175-196

Thursday, November 20

McAllister 53-116, 143-174, 197-198

Research Presentations

Tuesday, December 2

Thursday, December 4

Tuesday, December 9

What Next?

Thursday, December 11