

SYLLABUS

RLST 4450, sec. 001
RELIGION AND NONVIOLENCE
MWF 2:00 - 2:50; Hellems 196

FALL 2010
Prof. Ira Chernus

This course will examine some of the connections between religion and the tradition of principled nonviolence. We will trace the history of nonviolence movements in the U.S. from colonial times to the present, with special attention to the influence of Christian theology and the teachings of Gandhi. We will also study a classic critique of nonviolence offered by the Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. Although we will give some attention to practices and tactics of nonviolence, the emphasis will be on the intellectual traditions, the logical arguments for nonviolence, and the historical contexts in which those ideas arose.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Staughton & Alice LYND, eds., *Nonviolence in America*

Ira CHERNUS, *American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea*

Mahatma GANDHI, *The Essential Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, ed. Raghavan Iyer

These readings are available at the LEFTHAND BOOKSTORE, 1200 Pearl Street; just east of Broadway, south side of mall, lower level. They are usually open 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM Monday through Saturday and noon - 6:00 PM Sunday. Call 443-8252 to make sure they are open. The books were not ordered through the CU Bookstore.

The books are also on reserve in Norlin Library.

Other READINGS are available online, linked from the online version of this syllabus at:

<http://spot.colorado.edu/~chernus/Courses/4800/index.html>

OFFICE HOURS:

I will have office hours Monday and Wednesday, 12:30 - 1:30, or by appointment

office: HUMN 284; phone: 492-6169; email: chernus@colorado.edu

If you need any special accommodations to enhance your learning in this course, I would be glad to discuss that with you.

SCHEDULE OF READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Aug. 25: CHERNUS: Introduction

Aug. 27: CHERNUS: Chapter 1, "The Anabaptists"

Aug. 30: CHERNUS: Chapter 2, "The Quakers"

Sept. 1: LYND: xi-xvii, 1, 2 (Assignments in LYND are by Document number; roman numerals refer to the Introduction)

Sept. 3: CHERNUS: Chapter 3, "The Abolitionists"; LYND: xvii-xxi, 3, 4

- Sept. 8: CHERNUS: Chapter 4, “Henry David Thoreau”; LYND: 5
- Sept. 10: CHERNUS: Chapter 5, “Anarchists”; LYND: xxi-xxiii, 7 - 9
- Sept. 13: CHERNUS: pp. 75 - 82; LYND: xxiv-xxv, 13, 14
- Sept. 15: CHERNUS: pp. 83 - 90
- Sept. 17: LYND: xv-xxviii, 15 - 18
- Sept. 20: FIRST EXAM DUE IN CLASS
- Sept. 22: CHERNUS: pp. 91 – 99; GANDHI: 136, 142, 143 (Assignments in Gandhi are by Selection number. There is a glossary in the GANDHI book to help you with terms. There is a more detailed glossary at <http://www.mkgandhi-sarvodaya.org/glossary.htm>)
Please watch the film *Gandhi* as soon as you can.
- Sept. 24: GANDHI: 137, 140, 141, 144-147, 61, 65, 70, 75-83, 104, 123, 125, 126
- Sept. 27: CHERNUS: pp. 99 – 103; GANDHI: 148-155
- Sept. 29: GANDHI: 157, 161-176
- Oct. 1: CHERNUS: pp. 103 – 110; GANDHI: 186-194
- Oct. 4: GANDHI: 195-209, 213, 219, 35, 37, 40, 48
- Oct. 6: GANDHI: 223-239
- Oct. 8: GANDHI: 240 - 264
- Oct. 11: CHERNUS: pp. 111 – 116; READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 1](#)
- Oct. 13: READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 2](#)
- Oct. 15: CHERNUS: pp. 116 - 119; READINGS: [Summary](#) Of *Moral Man And Immoral Society* Chapter 3; Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 3](#)
- Oct. 18: READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 4](#)
- Oct. 20: READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 5](#)
- Oct. 22: NO CLASS
- Oct. 25: CHERNUS: pp. 119 - 122; READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 6](#)
- Oct. 27: READINGS: Selections from Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, [Section 7](#); CHERNUS: pp. 122 - 126

Oct. 29: CHERNUS: Chapter 10, "Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement": LYND: 37A&B

Nov. 1: SECOND EXAM DUE IN CLASS

Nov. 3: CHERNUS: pp. 127 - 136

Nov. 5: CHERNUS: pp. 136 - 144; LYND: 19 - 21; READINGS: Kitterman, "[Those Who Said No to the Holocaust](#)"; Sharp, "[Norway and Berlin](#)"

Nov. 8: LYND: xxviii-xxxv, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31

Nov. 10: CHERNUS: Chapter 11, "Martin Luther King, Jr."

Nov. 12: LYND: 27, 32

Nov. 15: LYND: xxxv-xl, 33 - 36

Nov. 17: LYND: 38 - 41

Nov. 19: NO CLASS

Nov. 29: CHERNUS: Chapter 12, "Barbara Deming"

Dec. 1: LYND: 44, 45

Dec. 3: CHERNUS: 192 - 198

Dec. 6: CHERNUS: 198 - 203

Dec. 8: LYND, xli-xlvi, 50-56

Dec. 10: CHERNUS: "Conclusion"

Dec. 13: FINAL EXAM DUE

EVALUATION:

Your grade will be based on:

1. Participation in class discussion.
2. Three take-home essay exams. The first two exams are due in class on Sept. 20 and Nov. 1, The third exam is a take-home final exam, due Dec. 13. The questions will be distributed well in advance. There will be no in-class exams in this course.

Each student is also expected to present two brief (1 page) reflection papers, to be presented in class. These will not be graded. Each paper will discuss one of the daily reading assignments. You are not to summarize the day's reading. You are to identify one question arising from the reading that you think is interesting for class discussion. State the question clearly, then give your answer and your reasons for your answer in a logical argument. (A sign-up sheet will be circulated in class for presentations.)