Theo 213.01
Peacemakers and Peacemaking
Spring 2014
William Werpehowski
wjw33@georgetown.edu
202.687.5328
117 New North
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:00 p.m. and by appointment

Doyle Seminar

This course is a Doyle Seminar, part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, a new campus-wide curricular initiative, and gives faculty the opportunity to enhance the student research component of upper-level seminars that address questions of national, social, cultural, religious, moral, and other forms of difference. The Doyle seminars are intended to deepen student learning about diversity and difference through enhanced research opportunities, interaction with thought leaders, and dialogue with the Georgetown community and beyond.

Course Description

This course studies the personal and social character of the religious commitment to nonviolence in relation to concrete struggles for social justice. We will take up a trajectory of reflection and practice that extends from M.K. Gandhi through Martin Luther King, Jr., and then, with important modifications, onto Roman Catholic prophetic witness in the works and life of Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and Daniel Berrigan. Buddhist and Muslim approaches to nonviolence and political life follow—with and without overlap. The course includes a condensed but considered look at Gene Sharp's "secular" vision of nonviolent resistance to tyranny and its reputed influence for the Arab Spring and other revolutionary movements around the world.

Some specific issues we will address: the meaning of peace; the meaning of violence and nonviolence; religious understandings of the relation between love and justice in personal and political life; the significance and efficacy of nonviolence as a moral virtue and a political strategy; the dialogue between religions on the way to personal and social transformation.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify and critically analyze a variety of approaches to the relation between nonviolence and the struggle for justice and peace in the world.
2. Analyze and critically evaluate arguments and approaches that seek to connect forms of religious commitment and spirituality to the pursuit of the moral life, and especially to a nonviolent moral life.

3. Read texts carefully and critically, and write and speak clearly and thoughtfully about the normative questions we consider.

**Texts for Purchase**

Gandhi, *Selected Political Writings*
King, *I Have a Dream*
Merton, *Passion for Peace*
Berrigan, *Selected Writings*
Thich Nhat Hanh, *Love in Action*

**Course Requirements**

Your learning and your success in this course will depend in good measure on timely, close, and thoughtful reading of all assigned texts. Please bring daily readings to class. If these readings are taken from WebCT, be sure to have a paper copy with you. *No student laptops will be allowed to be up and running in the classroom without express permission.*

Attendance and participation in class (20% of final grade). If you have more than three unexcused absences, you will fail the course.

An ongoing required practice: Following diligent preparation, come to class once a week with a) a “key text” or passage from the day’s assigned reading that you believe captures something essential about the author’s relevant argument or point of view; b) a brief commentary (no more than two paragraphs) on the passage and its significance as you understand it; and then c) one or two critical questions about the assignment for the day. The questions can be for purposes of clarification or challenge or both. Students in the course will be divided into two sections, and each section will be responsible for Monday and Wednesday meetings, respectively. Students should be prepared regularly and thoughtfully to contribute to course discussions, to lead them on occasion, and to deliver a copy of your text, commentary, and question(s) to your professor after class.

Two short essays, each 1000 words or so, essential to the seminar and to your research and due before and after spring break, respectively (30% total). The first essay asks you to consider Reinhold Niebuhr’s analysis of “nonviolent resistance” vis a vis M.K. Gandhi and M.L. King. The second will be a critical comparison of “religious” and “secular” approaches to nonviolent struggles for social justice.

A major term paper, 20-25 pages (50%). Students will be expected to conduct planning and research and writing for the paper throughout the semester. *Crucially, drafts of all, term papers will be due, and delivered to all participants in the seminar, no later than 2*
p.m. on Friday, April 11. Why? The final section of the seminar is devoted to discussion of essay drafts. Final copy is due by 2:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1.

Writing Center

The Writing Center provides one-on-one peer tutoring focused on improving your writing skills. I encourage you to take your paper drafts to the Writing Center. Visit http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/ for more information. You can also schedule an appointment with a tutor online on the Center's website.

Academic Resource Center

If you have a disability, or believe you might, and would like to receive accommodations in my course, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) to register as a student with a disability, or for an evaluation referral. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies. The Center is located on the third floor of the Leavey Center, Suite 335; you may access their website at http://ldss.georgetown.edu/.

Honor System

As signatories to the Georgetown University Honor Pledge, and indeed simply as good scholars and citizens, you are required to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of this course. You are expected to be familiar with the letter and spirit of the Standards of Conduct outlined in the Georgetown Honor System and on the Honor Council website. As faculty, I too am obligated to uphold the Honor System, and will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

(What follows is subject to revision at the instructor’s discretion. Revisions will likely include time set aside, inside and outside of class, for discussion with guest speakers and conversation partners.)

I. One Trajectory: Tolstoy, Gandhi, and King

1/8 Introduction to the course

1/13 Leo Tolstoy and nonviolence
    Tolstoy, “Letter to Ernest Howard Crosby” and The Law of Love and the Law of Violence, Chapter 17 (Blackboard)

1/15 Interpreting Gandhi and nonviolence
Gandhi, 29-57
Recommended: “Introduction,” 3-25

1/22 Continued
Gandhi, 58-91

1/27 Freedom
Gandhi, 97-137

1/29 Conversion? Coercion?
Reinhold Niebuhr, “The Preservation of Moral Values in Politics”
(Blackboard)

2/3 The Life and Witness of Martin Luther King, Jr.
King, “Chronology” and Chapters 1, 3, 6, 7
Recommended: Chapter 5

2/5 Continued
King, Chapters 10, 11, 15

2/10 Conclusion
King, Chapters 16-17

II. A Roman Catholic Contribution

2/12 Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker
“The Catholic Worker Movement”
“The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker”
Day, “Love is the Measure;” “Our Country Passes from Undeclared to Declared War;” “The Scandal of the Works of Mercy” (all on Blackboard)
Recommended: Screen the short videos on Dorothy Say at the Catholic Worker web site.

2/17 Continued
Day, “This Money is Not Ours;” “Poverty and Precarity;” “Little by Little” (or “The Faces of the Poor”); “The Mystery of the Poor” (all on Blackboard)

2/19 Thomas Merton’s passion for peace
Merton, 23-58

2/24 Continued
Merton, 72-112
Raboteau, “A Hidden Wholeness: Martin Luther King asnd Thomas Merton” (Blackboard)
Recommended: Merton, 159-69
2/26  Daniel Berrigan, prophecy and resurrection  
       Berigan, 15-19, 53-107  
       Recommended: 21-37

3/3   Continued  
       Berigan, 108-124, 163-174, 178-205

3/5   Conclusion  
       Berigan, 236-240, 245-281

*Enjoy spring break*

**III. A Brief Secular Interlude**

3/17  Gene Sharp  
       Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, Chapters 1-6 and pp. 79-86  
       (Blackboard)

**IV. Buddhist and Muslim Approaches**

3/19  The Engaged Buddhism of Thich Nhat Hanh  
       Thich Nhat Hanh, 3-56

3/24  Continued  
       Thich Nhat Hanh, 65-100

3/26  Conclusion  
       Thich Nhat Hanh, 107-112, 127-138

3/31  Muslim Peacemaking  

4/2   Continued  
       no new assignment

4/7   Conclusion  
       Assignment TBA

4/9   Class will not meet—*work on your term paper drafts for submission on April 11*

4/14-  Discussion of student research in progress  
4/28