



Philosophies of Nonviolence

Philosophy Department
PHI 330 Fall, 2012
Section 001: Old Main G24, 10:20-11:30 MWF
3 Credit Hours
Instructor: Dr. Andy Fitz-Gibbon
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Office Hours: Old Main 140-A, MW 2:30-4:00 or by appointment

Course Description

(C) Examination of a variety of philosophies, theories and practices of nonviolence from both western and eastern perspectives. (3 cr. hr.)

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- a) Understand a variety of philosophies of nonviolence.
- b) Conduct a thoughtful and respectful dialogue on important philosophical aspects of nonviolence.
- c) Synthesize and reflect upon primary sources and secondary texts in written and verbal form.
- d) Construct a reasoned philosophical argument.
- e) Challenge assumptions and unquestioned beliefs.
- f) Think more critically and reflectively about the nature of human violence.
- g) Apply the concepts and theories covered in the course to areas of contemporary importance.

Required Texts

Hannah Arendt. (1970) *On Violence*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace and Co.

Robert L. Holmes and Barry L. Gant (2005, 2012) *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*. Long Grove IL: Waveland press.

Immanuel Kant (1983) *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.

Michael N. Nagler (2004) *The Search for a Nonviolent Future: A Promise of Peace for Ourselves, Our Families, and Our World*. Maui, HI: Inner Ocean Publishing.

Course Requirements

The course has a large discussion requirement, based on the required texts. Set reading and class participation are essential. Classes missed without prearrangement or a medical excuse will have negative consequences on final grade.

Each student will be required to write two 5-7-page critical philosophical book reviews, take part in a student presentation with a 3-4-page presentation paper and write a 7-10 page final paper on a subject in consultation with the instructor.

Final grade will be based on the following:

Class participation/attendance	10%
Class presentation and paper	20%
One 5-7 Page paper	20%
One 5-7 Page paper	20%
One 7-10 Page paper, final take home	30%

Grade Distribution:

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	
A = 94-96	B = 84-86	C = 74-76	D = 64-66	
A- = 90-93	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73	D- = 60-63	E = 0-59

Papers are due on

Presentation paper is due on the day of your presentation

October 1 (5-7 page)

November 5 (5-7 page)

Final paper (7-10 pages) due last day of class, December 7

Writing a Critical Philosophical Book Review

Total 5-7 Pages. Divide your review into three parts:

- Description 1 page
- Analysis 2-3 page
- Response 2-3 page

Description

Summarize the author's thesis or argument.

Analysis

In your analysis you might want to consider these questions (amongst others): What philosophical positions does the author take? How does the author justify her/his argument? Are the author's

premises true, probable or plausible? Is the argument of the book sound? Are there historical comparisons? What was the context of the writing? Which other philosopher's have taken a similar/opposite view to the author? *You will not be able to cover all of this in 3 pages, so careful thought and writing is important.*

Response

Do you agree with the author? Present a reasoned argument why you do or do not? What other philosophy/philosophers would you use to support your response? How would you modify the author's position?

Online helps:

http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/book_reviews.shtml

<http://www.lavc.cc.ca.us/Library/bookreview.htm>

Presentation Paper

Using the work of Ackerman and DuVall, Analyze a world situation where nonviolence was used as an effective means of social change. What were the philosophical underpinnings of the movement? How successful was it? What problems did it face? How might it have been more successful? In your presentation be as creative as possible. You may use power point, video/DVD clips.

Final Paper 7-10 pages, choose a subject in consultation with Dr. Fitz-Gibbon

The Syllabus

Discussions in class are based on the readings. The readings are essential and must be read before class.

Week One

General introduction and Expectations

Violence and Nonviolence, personal narratives about violence and nonviolence, nonviolent practices

Definitions of violence, definitions of nonviolence

Week Two

No Class Labor Day September 3

The logic of violence: Film *The Fog of War* (excerpts and discussion)

The logic of violence: Film *The Fog of War* (excerpts and discussion)

Week Three

Hannah Arendt On Violence: Analysis and discussion pp 1-56
Background, Cold War, 9/11 aftermath, WHO Report on Violence 2002

Hannah Arendt On Violence: Analysis and discussion pp 59-87
Why do people turn to violence? Violence and politics, understanding power and violence, the Iraq war in the light of Arendt

Arendt Concluded

Week Four

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part One "Origins"

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part Two "Three Modern Philosophers"
Tolstoy, Gandhi and King, basic principles of nonviolence

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part Three "Women and Nonviolence"
analysis of the place of women in various nonviolent movements

Week Five

Film: Bringing Down A Dictator.

Discussion of Bringing Down A Dictator

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part Four "Pacifism" analysis of movements
in opposition to war and various understandings of the word "pacifism"

Week Six

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part Five "The Practice of Nonviolence" The
intifada in Palestine, violence versus nonviolence, violence and the criminal
justice system

Nonviolence in Theory and Practice: Part Six "Examples of Nonviolence" case
studies

Week Seven

Oct 6

Student Presentations #1

Gene Sharp and Nonviolent Action

Gene Sharp and Nonviolent Action Continued

No Class Fri Oct 12 Fall Break

Week Eight

Nagler chap 1 Nagler's definition, integrative power, does nonviolence work?

Nagler chap 2 Three lenses for looking at nonviolence: moral, medical and educational models

Nagler chap 3 Nonviolence as peak experience, developing nonviolent strategies, nonviolent training

Week Nine

Student Presentations #2

Nagler chap 4 case studies in nonviolent work

Nagler chap 5 Religious perspectives and nonviolence

Week Ten

Nagler chap 6 Constructive program, models of community

Nagler chap 7 Body mind and spirit perspectives on peacemaking

Concerned Philosophers for Peace Conference

Week Eleven

Debrief Concerned Philosophers for Peace Conference

Student Presentations #3

Nagler chap 8 Body mind and spirit perspectives on peacemaking continued

Week Twelve

Nagler chap 9 The metaphysics of compassion

René Girard, Mimetic Violence and Scapegoating

René Girard, Mimetic Violence and Scapegoating Continued

Week Thirteen

Student Presentations #4

Group Discussion of Kant's Perpetual Peace Group Discussion

Vegetarianism and Violence

No class Wed Nov 21 and Fri Nov 23 Thanksgiving

Week Fourteen

Film: Orange Revolution

Week Fifteen

Film: Orange Revolution Continued

Writing final papers and loose ends

Last Class

Policies and Information

1. SUNY Cortland is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act 1973.

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please contact the office of Disability Services located in B-40 Van Hoesen Hall or call (607) 753-2066 for an appointment. Any information regarding your disability will remain confidential. Because many accommodations require early planning, requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible. Any request for accommodations will be reviewed in a timely manner to determine their appropriateness to this setting.

2. Absolutely no late work will be accepted unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Such arrangements will be made only under unusual circumstances.

3. Plagiarism. All work submitted must be your own. Ideas borrowed from others, either directly, or through paraphrase, must be well documented through endnotes or footnotes. If plagiarism is suspected the student will be reported to the Provost and can either accept the charge or defend her or himself in the Grievance Tribunal.

4. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what went on in class, whether any assignments were given, and for keeping up with your work.

SUNY Cortland Conceptual Framework

The mission of teacher education at SUNY Cortland is to build upon the foundation of liberal learning in the development of teachers who have exceptional pedagogical

knowledge and skills. The foundation of liberal learning informs the professional education strand in an innovative thematic approach that emphasizes personal responsibility, global understanding and social justice. Graduates of SUNY Cortland's teacher education program will be prepared to think critically, utilize technology, communicate effectively, understand and value diversity, contribute to their communities, and make a difference in the lives of their students.