Course Description

A life of engagement in social transformation is often built on a foundation of spiritual and religious commitments. Using case studies of several nonviolent social change agents--Rosa Parks in the civil rights movement in Montgomery, Alabama, Cesar Chavez in the labor movement and William Sloane Coffin in the peace movement, we will examine the theory and principles of nonviolence as well as the religious and spiritual underpinnings of their commitments. The class will address social change, spirituality and religious traditions through films, texts and service. The class will consider the religious and spiritual underpinnings of nonviolence, the streams that fed major nonviolent activists and the philosophers and theologians who influenced them. Additionally, we will address how social change happens in urban, rural and national arenas, how to stay buoyant over time while engaged in social transformation, and how some communities and organizations are living out nonviolent social transformation. There will be a service-learning component included, with placements in organizations engaged in social transformation.
**Course Readings:**

The following texts are required and are available for purchase at the Stanford Bookstore. They are also on reserve in Green Library.

**Course Reader:**
The course reader labeled “Urban Studies 126/Religious Studies 162” can be purchased through University Readers (800-200-3908) [www.universityreaders.com](http://www.universityreaders.com) for $78.66. Detailed instructions can be found at http://www.universityreaders.com/students/instructions/
They will send to you an electronic PDF of the first three sessions’ readings upon purchase so you will have what you need until the reader arrives.

**Books:**
Daniel Berrigan, *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*
Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*
Jacques E. Levy, *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa*
Colman McCarthy, *I’d Rather Teach Peace*

The following text is required, but out of print: Copies should be available on reserve in Green Library and several copies will be available for loan from the Office for Religious Life.

Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom*

**Course Films:**
Films related to the course must be screened as preparation for the seminar discussions. Building 200, room 202 has been reserved for class screenings, which will take place at 7 p.m. on the night before the film will be discussed in class. (We have the space until 9:30 p.m. so if there is a better time, we can modify the start time.) For each film, we ask for a student volunteer to pick up the film from the library and return it following the screening. They will also be available in the library for those unable to come to the class screenings.

*India: Defying the Crown: A Force More Powerful (Gandhi)*--Screened on Jan 6 (ZDVD 4365)
*This Far By Faith: Freedom Faith*--Screened on Jan 12 (Personal copy)
*We Were Warriors: A Force More Powerful (Nashville)*--Screened on Jan 17 (ZDVD 4362)
*The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It*--Screened on Jan. 31 (ZDVD 11126)
*The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Struggle*--Screened on Feb. 14 (ZVC 14137)

**Course Requirements:**
A. Regular class participation

Classes will generally be conducted in a “Socratic” discussion-based style, requiring active participation of all students in each session. Everyone must read and screen films critically and carefully. All students are expected to have completed assignments before each meeting and to take an active part in discussion.

B. Written Assignments

1) Weekly response paper. Once per week (except for the first and last two weeks), you are responsible for writing a response paper (approximately 250 words, which translates to one page, double-spaced) discussing and raising questions about the week's reading and films. These papers are informal. You can use them to give personal reactions to the readings and films, synthesize and compare sources, or raise questions to discuss in class. These response papers are due via email by 9 p.m. on the evening prior to each class. (Half of the class will be responsible for turning in response papers on Tuesday and half for Thursday. We will switch off to maintain fairness.)

Weekly response papers should be emailed to the three instructors’ addresses on the first page of the syllabus. For any reason, you may miss turning in one response paper, without penalty.

2) A research presentation and paper (approximately 2000 words, which translates to 8 double-spaced pages) is due at the end of the quarter. The research should be on a topic of your choice, offering creative thinking on themes related to the course. This research can be an elaboration of ideas we have surveyed in class or an exploration of material that we were unable to cover (e.g., other movements that have incorporated nonviolence, how nonviolence is understood in a particular religious tradition, the role of religion in current social change issues). The preparation should involve reading beyond the syllabus itself; it may include interviews or use of other media such as film. The instructors are available to meet individually to help formulate topics.

• Be prepared to discuss your research ideas in class on Tuesday, Feb. 9.
• A written proposal of your research is due in class on Thursday, Feb. 11.
• In-class presentations will take place on March 9 and March 11.
• Papers are due in both hard copy (dropped off at the Round Room in Memorial Church) and electronically (to the three instructors) by 5 p.m. on Thursday March 18.

3) Two journal entries, 3-4 pages long, double-spaced (750-1000 words), based on your experiences with your organization. We ask that you be in your service learning placement by the end of the second week of the quarter and that you are prepared to discuss the service learning questions in class upon turning in your entries. See the service-learning supplement for further direction.

• The first journal entry is due on Thursday, Jan. 28.
• The second journal entry is due on Thursday, March 4.

C. Service Learning Community Placement

Students are expected to spend a minimum of 24 hours during the quarter on the service-learning component of the course. This averages out to 3 hours per week for eight weeks at the placement (not including transportation). You are expected to be in your placement by the end of the second week of the quarter.

Grading will be calculated as follows:

30%-- Class participation
20%-- Response papers
25%-- 8 page double-spaced (2000 words) paper and presentation
     (Please provide a word count at the end of your paper)
25%-- Service learning participation and reflection

Students with documented disabilities:

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) located within the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). SDRC staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the SDRC as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, 723-1067 TTY).

Dates to Note:
Jan. 7: Service Learning placement decisions
Jan. 28: Service Learning journal #1 due
Feb. 9: Research Proposal discussion
Feb. 11: Research Proposal due
Mar. 4: Service Learning journal #1 due
Mar. 9/11: Student Research Presentations
Mar. 18: Research Papers due

Class Sessions:

Syllabus is subject to change during the course.

Tuesday, January 5—Introduction and Course Overview
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan, Mana Hayakawa
In-Class Screening: *Weapons of the Spirit* (ZVC 3375) – The story of a village in France, *Le Chambon-sur-Lignon*, that took in and sheltered 5000 Jews from Nazis. Told by Jewish filmmaker, Pierre Sauvage, who was himself born and protected in that defiantly peaceful community.

**Thursday, January 7—Introduction: Spirituality, Nonviolence and Social Transformation**
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan, Joanne Sanders, Mana Hayakawa

**Decide upon Service Learning placement**

**Course Reader:**

**CourseWork:**


Remen, Rachel, “Helping, Fixing or Serving?” (*Shambhala Sun* 1999)

**Film Screening** *India: Defying the Crown, A Force More Powerful* (Gandhi) ZDVD 4365 **Building 200, room 202 on Wed. Jan. 6 at 7 p.m.**

**Study Questions:**
- What is the difference between service learning and volunteering?
- Define “violence” and “nonviolence”.
- Can Gandhi's nonviolent methods to promote social change be separated from his spirituality?
- What made Gandhi so effective as a political organizer?

**Tuesday, January 12—Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott**
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Joanne Sanders, Mana Hayakawa

**Reading:** Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*, p. 1-175; 226-231

**Course Reader:**
Bayard Rustin, *Time On Two Crosses: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin*, pp. 2-5

**Study Questions:**
- What in Rosa Parks’ life enabled her to begin the modern civil rights movement?
- What were the elements in her education that led her to become the force that she was?
- What inspired her to refuse to give up her seat on December 1, 1955?
- How grounded was Rosa Parks’ nonviolence in her religious life? In her work for the NAACP?
- How has the popular understanding of Parks’ refusal to give up her seat a disservice to the civil rights movement?

**Thursday, January 14—Faith and Resistance in the Civil Rights Struggle**
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Joanne Sanders

**Course Reader:**
Juan Williams and Quinton Dixie, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience*, pp. 199-216, 223-229, notes 308-309

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, “Religion and Race” and “The White Man on Trial” in *The Insecurity of Freedom*, p. 85-111

**Internet Resource:**
[http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week1120/1120_Heschel.mp3](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week1120/1120_Heschel.mp3)

**Film Screening** *This Far By Faith: Freedom Faith* Building 200, room 202
Tues. Jan. 12 at 7 p.m.

**Study Questions:**
- In what ways did religious faith sustain the civil rights movement?
- How was Christianity interpreted through the lens of different communities?
- What is the role of art (music and film) in social transformation?
- How does Abraham Joshua Heschel’s theology inform his treatment of race in America?

**Tuesday, January 19—Nonviolence and the Civil Rights Struggle**
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan

**Reading:** Martin Luther King Jr. *Stride Toward Freedom*, pp.17-21, 28-42, 49-52, 60-64, 79-80, 84-107, 134-138, 149-150, 160-174, 205-224
(There are several different editions of this text. For the content on each page, see CourseWork.)
Film Screening: We Were Warriors: A Force More Powerful (Nashville) ZDVD 4362 Building 200, room 202 at Sun. Jan. 17 at 7 p.m.

Study Questions:
• How did Martin Luther King, Jr. become a leader? Did his training prepare him for it?
• What was King’s and Lawson’s understanding of nonviolence? Was it a tactic or a way of life? How did it differ from Gandhi’s nonviolence?
• How can King’s and Lawson’s convictions be applied in today’s civil rights climate?

Thursday, January 21—The Challenge to Nonviolence: The Civil Rights Struggle
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan

Internet Resource:
(These links may or may not work; There are transcriptions of these two speeches in the CourseWork)

http://www.brothermalcolm.net/mxwords/whathesaid8.html
Malcolm X “The Ballot or the Bullet” April 3, 1964
http://www.brothermalcolm.net/mxwords/whathesaid13.html

Course Reader:

CourseWork:
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/malcolmxgrassroots.htm
Malcolm X “The Ballot or the Bullet” April 3, 1964
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/malcolmxballotorbullet.htm

Study Questions:
• Can nonviolent movements be successful if they do not provoke violence? If they do not have media coverage?
• What is the substance of the conflict between King and Malcolm X?
• What role does/can the media play in social transformation?

Tuesday, January 26—The Challenge to Nonviolence: Politics and Religion
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan

Course Reader:

Niebuhr, Reinhold, excerpt from “Why the Christian Church is Not Pacifist” (pp. 1-32) as reproduced in Larry Rasmussen, Reinhold Niebuhr: Theologian of Public Life (London: Collins, 1989), pp. 237-253

CourseWork:

King, Martin Luther, Jr. Excerpts from “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence” in Clayborne Carson et al., The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), Vol. 4


Study Questions:

• What arguments do you find most compelling for the use of violence in the writing of Reinhold Niebuhr?
• Do you agree with Niebuhr that Christianity does not support pacifism in the political arena?
• Do you agree with Gene Sharp that it is important to separate nonviolence as a matter of belief from nonviolence as a pragmatic tactic to use in the right situation?
• Under what political circumstances is nonviolence simply impractical? When is it irresponsible from a moral perspective?

Thursday, January 28—Interlude I: Service Learning Discussion; Politics and Religion in Our Time
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Joanne Sanders, Mana Hayakawa

Service-Learning Journal Entry #1 Due

Course Reader:


E.J. Dionne, Jr., Jean Bethke Elshtain, and Kayla M. Drogosz, (Eds.), One Electorate under God?: A Dialogue on Religion and American Politics, pp.1-38, 228, 233
Study Questions:
- How can service learning be harmful?
- What is the relationship between service learning and a lifelong commitment to social justice?
- What are the opportunities and pitfalls in mixing religion and politics?
- Should religion shape politics?
- What is unique about religion and politics in America?
- What are Cuomo’s and Souder’s distinctly religious motivations?

Tuesday, February 2—Conscientious Objection to War
Scotty McLennan

Course Reader:

Film Screening The Good War and Those who Refused to Fight it (ZDVD 11126)
Building 200, room 202 on Sun. January 31 at 7 p.m.

Study Questions:
- To what extent can conscientious objection to serving in the military be considered effective nonviolent social transformation?
- Why do conscientious objectors to war engender so much anger and hatred?
- Why does David Dellinger make so much of the connection between building a nonviolent antiwar movement, union organizing and anti-racism work?

Thursday, February 4—Religious Opposition to the Vietnam War
Scotty McLennan, Joanne Sanders

Course Reader:
William Sloane Coffin, Once to Every Man, pp. 216-229

Abraham Joshua Heschel, Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity, pp. vii-ix; 224-226

CourseWork:
Martin Luther King, “Beyond Vietnam”: address delivered to Clergy and Layman Concerned about Vietnam at Riverside Church
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkatimetobreaksilence.htm

Warren Goldstein, William Sloane Coffin, Jr. pp. 183-224

Study Questions:
• What were William Sloane Coffin’s uniquely religious reasons for opposing the war in Vietnam? What were Abraham Joshua Heschel’s?
• What were Martin Luther King’s reasons for opposing the war? Why was this controversial?
• To what extent did William Sloane Coffin effectively lead a movement, or to what extent was he simply a charismatic figure promoting himself and his personal vision?
• Did Coffin lack moral courage in pleading “not guilty” to the charge of conspiracy to violate draft laws, after claiming to stand with draft resisters by going to jail alongside them?

Tuesday, February 9—Research Proposal Discussion and Mid-Quarter Course Evaluation; The Formation of a Religious Conscience
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Joanne Sanders, Mana Hayakawa

Discussion of Research Proposals

In Class: Excerpts from Film: William Sloane Coffin: An American Prophet (ZDVD 11302)

Course Reader:

William Sloane Coffin, A Passion for the Possible, pp. 15-25
William Sloane Coffin, The Heart is a Little to the Left, pp. 59-67

CourseWork:
Warren Goldstein, William Sloane Coffin Jr., pp. 64-85, 122-128

Study Questions:
• To what extent was William Sloane Coffin’s development and success as an American prophet tied to his Yale education and to his institutional home there as University Chaplain?
• Can William Sloane Coffin, army officer and CIA cold warrior, properly be considered spiritually committed to nonviolent social transformation?
• What would William Sloane Coffin say to pacifist Martin Luther King’s claim that with nuclear weapons “Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind...It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence.”
• How can Coffin’s convictions be applied in today’s climate of war and peace?

Thursday, February 11—The Individual Conscience and the State
Scotty McLennan, Patricia Karlin-Neumann

Research Proposals Due
Reading: Daniel Berrigan, *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*

**Study Questions:**
- Should the defendants' religious motivations and desire to promote peace and social justice be irrelevant in their criminal trial for burning draft files? Why (not)?
- What would you have done as the judge in this case? As a member of the jury?
- What is the logic of antiwar activist Daniel Berrigan's saying that "Our intention in appearing here [in court] after Catonsville was to be useful to the poor of the world, to the Black people of the world and of our country, and to those in our prisons who have no voice"? (p. 119)
- In what sense were the actions of the Catonsville Nine effective as nonviolent social transformation?

**Tuesday, February 16—Cesar Chavez and the Development of an Activist**
Joanne Sanders, Patricia Karlin-Neumann


Course Reader:
- Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals*, pp. xiii-xxvi; 63-80

Film Screening *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers’ Struggle* ZVC 14137 Bulding 200, room 202 on Sun. Feb. 14 at 7 p.m.

**Study Questions:**
- What were the critical factors in Cesar Chavez's development of a nonviolent philosophy?
- What did Cesar Chavez and Fred Ross see in each other that led to their organizing work together?
- What were the main elements of Alinsky’s organizing campaigns, and would they work today?
- What was the practical relationship between violence and nonviolence in Chavez's campaigns?
- How is the film “Fight in the Fields” a convincing portrayal of spirituality and social transformation?

**Thursday, February 18—Cesar Chavez and the Labor Movement: A Vision of Liberation**
Joanne Sanders, Patricia Karlin-Neumann

Reading: Jacques E. Levy, *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa*, pp.xi-xix; 151-165; 179-181; 296-300; 536-539; 549-550
Study Questions:

• What enabled Cesar Chavez to model such a stark contrast to the American way of life, the “American dream,” where seizing opportunity and accumulating wealth is considered a worthy goal?

• Given the history of agribusiness that Chavez describes on pages 151-156, what made the United Farm Workers (UFW) succeed against "this background of defeats and nearly insurmountable problems”?

• In what ways did the UFW fail and why?

• How can Chavez’s convictions be applied to today’s climate of labor and immigration?

Tuesday, February 23—Spirituality and the Labor Movement
Joanne Sanders, Patricia Karlin-Neumann

Reading: Jacques E. Levy, Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa, pp. 272-278; 282-283 (Jerry Cohen Recalls); 479-480 (from Jacques Levy's Notebook); 504-510; 522-526; 541-548

Course Reader:

Course Work:
Cesar Chavez, “The Mexican-American and the Church”
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/cesarchavezspeechmexicanamericanchurch.htm

Rev. Emmett Jarrett, TSSF “Fasting”,
http://www.ctdiocese.org/Content/Fasting.asp


Study Questions:

• Was institutional and/or theological religious support appropriate for the farmworkers' movement? Why (not)?

• What is the spiritual dimension of fasting?

• In what ways did Dorothy Day’s feminism influence her theology and commitment to radical social change?

• Could the labor movement today be more successful with explicit religious support and/or use of spiritual resources?

Thursday, February 25— Interlude II: Nonviolence in Buddhism, Judaism and Islam
Scotty McLennan, Patricia Karlin-Neumann
Course Reader:
Thich Nhat Hanh, Creating True Peace: Ending Violence in Yourself, Your Family, Your Community and Your World, pp 1-18

James L. Heft, ed. Beyond Violence, Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, pp. 57-73, 88-112

Study Questions:
• How do the approaches to nonviolence of Buddhism, Judaism and Islam compare to that of Christianity?
• Can nonviolence be meaningfully translated into politics in other religious traditions?
• What is the role of symbols and stories in religious nonviolence?

Tuesday, March 2—Spiritual Teachers
Joanne Sanders, Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan

Note: You do not need to turn in a Response Paper this week

Reading: Colman McCarthy, I'd Rather Teach Peace

Study Questions:
• To what extent can education be a force for social transformation?
• Who are your spiritual teachers and why?

Thursday, March 4--Service Learning Reflections
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Joanne Sanders, Scotty McLennan, Maya Hayakawa

Service Learning Journal Entry #2 is due
Discussion of Service Learning placements

For the service learning discussion:
(3 minutes to present; 2 minutes for questions)
Consider one of the activists we’ve read and relate your experience in your placement to a question about nonviolence, spirituality or social transformation that they raised in their work.

Course Reader:
Wheatley, M.J., "Willing to be Disturbed" in Turning to one another: simple conversations to restore hope to the future. (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002), pp. 34-37

CourseWork:
right and wrong." Shambhala Sun, pp.19-23

Study Question:
• What surprised you about yourself in relation to your service learning experience?

Tuesday, March 9—Student Presentations
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan, Mana Hayakawa

Thursday, March 11—Student Presentations
Patricia Karlin-Neumann, Scotty McLennan, Joanne Sanders, Mana Hayakawa

Thursday, March 18—Research Paper Due in both hard copy (dropped off at the Round Room in Memorial Church) and electronically (to the three instructors) by 5 p.m.