"One of the extraordinary things about human events is that the unthinkable becomes thinkable."
Salman Rushdie

"There remains an experience of incomparable value. We have for once learnt to see the great events of world history from below, from the perspective of the outcast, the suspects, the maltreated, the powerless, the oppressed, the reviled - in short, from the perspective of those who suffer." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, resister, theologian, executed by the Nazis.

"At the end of this tunnel of darkness...there is inevitably a light, which we already divine and for which we only have to fight to ensure its coming. All of us, among the ruins, are preparing a renaissance beyond the limits of nihilism. But few of us realize it."
Albert Camus, *The Rebel*

"Is not this what I require of you as a fast: to loose the fetters of injustice, to untie the knots of the yoke..sharing food, taking in the homeless." Isaiah 58: 6-7

**COURSE**
As the thematic CORE course for the minor in public praxis, this course will study the theory and practice of public praxis, with a strong emphasis on the study of human rights and public/global citizenship. The theoretical study of public praxis will draw from Aristotle, Hegal, Marx, Jane Addams, John Dewey, Critical theory, and Liberation theology; and will witness, through course materials, praxis work nationally and globally, including initiatives of social entrepreneurship.

The study of human rights will include United Nations documents, the Geneva Conventions, the Helsinki Accords, Charter 77, Human Rights Watches/Amnesty International and the enormous work of resistance on behalf of human rights throughout the world. Codified in the 20th century, basic human rights are rooted in the inherent dignity of human beings.

Non-violent resistance to injustice supports and struggles for human rights, and for social and economic justice. This resistance takes uncountable forms – from simple non-cooperation with injustice, to sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, to sitting on tracks at a depot in Oregon to stop trains transporting nuclear weapons, to picketing stores with racist hiring practices, to public fasting-to-the-death for the Haitian boat people, to boycotting chocolate with child slavery in the pipeline – resistance from low-risk to increased risk, even to the risk of torture and prison. The current non-violent Occupy Wall Street movement is bringing to citizen consciousness the reality in the United States of increasing inequality and loss of quality of life.

Study of the theory and practice of non-violent resistance will focus on the prodigious work of Harvard scholar Gene Sharp; the civil rights movement in the U.S.; non-violent revolution in the Philippines; Gandhi’s theory and work in India; Denmark and the French Resistance during Nazi occupation; the Arab Spring; and the Occupy
Wall Street movement.

Whatever individual students' religious or secular orientation, the course will seek out sustaining sources of hope and inspiration. It will also witness the transformative power of non-violent social movements in the bringing about a more just and humane world.

Through texts, media, and class discourse, the course will become cognizant of the cross-winds and contradictory forces that constitute today's world context. We will search out root causes of socio-economic and political suffering and the hope and motivations for resisting and overcoming such forces. As the class participates in some form of resistance - on behalf of human rights and social justice - and identifies the hope and sustaining sources for this resistance, it will look hard at egregious poverty, slavery, trafficking, genocide, torture, the Israel/Palestinian conflict, and terrorism; AND AT THE SAME TIME, the multitude of efforts to counter such inhumanity through projects, programs, individuals, governments, Colleges and Universities, the United Nations, all working to rid the world of poverty, trafficking, slavery – aiming to advance a more humane world.

Jean-Paul Sartre. "Silence is support of the existing order."

Dave Dellinger. "A little reflection should convince most persons that one can learn more about the nature of our society by sharing in a small way the life of its victims than by interacting intellectually with its privileged academicians."

Martin Luther King, Jr. "We need to see in this century's ordeals the opportunity to transfigure both ourselves and society."

READINGS


* The World As it Is by Christopher Hedges
"The Power of the Powerless" by Vaclav Havel - find on-line

EITHER

* Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who would Cure the World by Tracy Kidder  AND
* Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade by David Batsone
OR FOR THOSE WHO HAVE READ THE ABOVE

* Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number by Jacobo Timmerman  AND
* The Long Haul by Myles Horton

* This Changes Everything: The Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement by Sarah vanGelder and staff YES! Magazine
* How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas by David Bornstein

Suggested:

Refusenik: Israel's Soldiers of Conscience, Compiled & Edited, Peretz Kidron
Neither Victims nor Executioners by Albert Camus
“Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Martin Luther King, Jr.
Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community? by Martin Luther King
The Call to Service: A Witness to Idealism by Robert Coles
The Least of These My Brethren by Daniel Baxter
Human Rights and Global Diversity by Robert Paul Churchill
Tattoos on the Heart by Fr. Greg Boyle
Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun by Geoffrey Canada
The Activist’s Handbook by Randy Shaw
The School of Assassins by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer and Roy Bourgeois
Resistance: A Woman's Journal of Struggle and Defiance in Occupied France by Agnes Humbert, tr. Barbara Mellor

CommonDreams.com
WAMC with the BBC – radio
Channels: Current; RT; PBS (documentaries)

Kay Boyle. "When everything else we have put our hands to is gone, the granite and steel cemented by our pitiless morality will remain as monument and gravestone to our time."

Martin Luther King, Jr. "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word....."

Daniel Berrigan. "To go on, hearkened or ignored, effective or despised, to go on as an evident truthful alternative, this is the task."

REQUIREMENTS Attendance/Assignments/Citizen Resistance Project

• Participatory Attendance 20% of grade

An A-level for this first requirement: no more than one missed class; readings prepared and referenced during class discourse; thoughtful weekly participation; supportive attending to others; lowering one’s final grade - texting/open computer/private conversations/in and out of class/inappropriate noise or disturbance. Each missed class after one class missed decreases your grade for this requirement a plus or minus. In-class analysis of social malady.

• Assignments 20% of grade

  • Three In-class written reflections (announced) - each 1 ½ pages
  • Letter of Advocacy/or Point-of-View article - 1 ½ pages DUE by end of February
  • Graphic broadsheet or flyer or pamphlet - 1 page double-sided/folded DUE March 7
  • Communal or Individual – creative booklet with graphics; or Individual - children’s book - ca. 6-12 pages Open DUE date – through April 11
You may do more than one from each of last three categories (subjects and material based on course readings and media). Highest 3 grades overall counted.

• **Sites of Resistance**  
  **20% of grade**

Visit 3 sites of resistance or humanitarian work – write a 1 1/2-page reflection on each, Including at least one related, substantive reference from course texts. The best of these site reflections may be collected into a booklet and posted on the public praxis website. Alternatively, construct an extensive listing (5-7 pages) of Resistance/Human Rights work, in U.S. and Globally. See Human Rights Watch website.

* **PP1: Citizen Resistance Project**  
  **40% of grade**

* The class will brainstorm re: a communal Citizen Resistance Project. The Project should identify a situation of injustice, a specific violation of human rights, and/or a humanitarian effort to counter dehumanization/evil. The Project aims to actively resist dehumanizing forces, to alleviate some form of suffering, to help transform conditions of inhumanity, and/or to increase somewhere in the world justice and well-being.

Options: communal class project/small group(s) project/individual project.

Components of the Project: experiential component; research; connections-to-course-material; root/pillar analysis; production of [communal] public document; deep reflection on meanings and outcomes; public presence/presentation; Individual critical Journal - 10 pages.

Evaluation:
- Experiential citizen work - 30%
- Integrated research and course connections - 30%
- Public Document - 20%
- Individual Journal - 10%
- Public Presentation - 10%

* **PP2: Capstone Public Citizen Project – Individual Projects;** Consult with Instructor/ form Capstone Committee; Conceive, implement, and establish Major Project, attending to all details including funding, and relational grounding with all involved; Produce substantive public document with critical reflection on and explication of project, inclusive recognition of all involved, analysis of prompting situation - conditions/situation of injustice; detailed suggestions for its continuity, policy recommendations, significant meanings and outcomes; list all who contribute to your work, giving credit. Meet frequently together with Instructor.

**OUTCOMES/ ASSESSMENT**

*Students should gain considerable knowledge of:*
- human rights documents, as well as violations of human rights in the 20th & 21st c., including genocide, torture, trafficking
- the theory and experience of public praxis;
- the theory and practice of non-violent resistance, including civil disobedience and multiple forms of resistance in the work of democracy, including social entrepreneurship; social movements toward democracy in the United States and globally;
global events, increasing global literacy, and expanding one's horizon of thought.
* sustaining sources of hope.
* Nobel Peace Prize laureates; activists such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Aung San Suu Kyi, Myles Horton, Cesar Chavez, Randall Robinson, Muhammad Ali, Dorothy Day, Helen Suzman.

These aims will be assessed through seminal reading, media presentations, in-class writing, creative work - producing broadsheets, pamphlets, flyers, booklets, letters of advocacy - and a substantive citizen praxis project. The Citizen Project will demand considerable experiential work, relative research, course connections, analysis, and the production of both a public document and an individual Journal. A public presentation of the Citizen work is required.

Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall. "The history of nonviolent action is not a succession of desperate idealists, occasional martyrs and charismatic emancipators. The real story is about common citizens who are drawn into great causes, which are built from the ground up."

Czeslaw Milosz. "In a room where people unanimously maintain a conspiracy of silence, one word of truth sounds like a pistol shot."

William Shakespeare. "The play's the thing/Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."

Elvis Presley. "Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it ain't goin' away."

Martin Luther King Jr. "Legislation won't change the heart, but it will restrain the heartless."

George Washington. "Treat them with humanity, and let them have no reason to complain of us copying the brutal manner of the British army....While we are contending for our own liberty we should be very cautious of violating the rights of conscience of others."

Czeslaw Milosz. "Our natural tendency to place the possible in the past leads us often to overlook the acts of our contemporaries, who defy the presumably unmovable order of things, and accomplish what at first sight has seemed impossible or improbable."

Jacobo Timmerman. "If you add up all the victims and victimizers, they form such a small percentage of the world population. What are the others engaged in? We victims and victimizers, we're part of the same humanity, colleagues in the same endeavor to prove the existence of ideologies, feelings, heroic deeds, religions, obsessions. And the rest of humanity, the great majority, what are they engaged in?"

Reading and Media schedule - approximate

HUMAN RIGHTS

January 18, 2012
Overview of course - illustrating core categories. Brief history of the concept of Human Rights, and their present force and configurations. View U. N. Documents. MEDIA - They Screamed Bloody Murder
A Reading from Small Acts of Resistance
Small groups - Identify present violations of human rights/situations of injustice, and actions
of resistance to injustice, dehumanization/violation of human rights.

**SONG**

**January 25**

Theory and practice of Public Praxis/ Class consideration of Syllabus/revisions?

**TEXT - Small Acts of Resistance** - Preface by Vaclav Havel; through p. 59

Geneva Conventions - Should these conventions apply to prisoners imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay?


**Citizen Clip** - Surveillance of Activists

**MEDIA** – CNN and the Freedom Project

**THEORY AND PRAXIS OF NONVIOLENCE**

**February 1**

Theory and practice of non-violent resistance

**TEXT - From Dictatorship to Democracy** first half of Text - critical strategy

**MEDIA** - How to Start a Revolution - Gene Sharp and the theory of non-violence

**February 8**

**TEXT - From Dictatorship to Democracy** remaining Text

**MEDIA** - People Power

Tactical Activism/Forms of Activism - Documentary/Sit-ins/Boycotts/

- Broadsheets/Street theatre/Picketing/Advocacy/Social
- Literature/Public Fasting – Gandhi/Cesar Chavez/Randall Robinson/Khadder Adnan

**ISREAL & PALESTINE**

**February 15**


Internat activists/Flotilla/break blockade/9 Turkish activists killed on the Mavi Marmara

**Citizen Clip** - Women in War/Palestinian & Israeli women

**Citizen Clip** - Bernardo - Prisoners & Imprisoned/Psychology of Power/Soldiers and Abusive acts/Psychology of torture/Abu Ghrabi


**Citizen Clips** - "Love Your Neighbor"; Michael Moore; Christopher Hedges

**February 22**

**TEXT - The World As It Is** - Israel & Palestine 131-204/"The Tears of Gaza Must Be Our Tears"

The context/history of Israel/Palestine

**Citizen Clip** - Sources of Hope/Archbishop Desmond Tutu/Liberation Theology

World Context/contradictory forces/good & evil - reference Dr. Paul Farmer; Analysis/ROOT OF ALL THAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD

**February 29**

**TEXT - The World As It Is**

**Citizen Clip** - Christopher Hedges, C-Span 11

Occupy Wall Street movement/ Spanish May 15 indignados/Occupy London

**Citizen Clip** - "A Force More Powerful"/Nashville/Denmark
March 7
**TEXT** - *This Changes Everything: The Occupy Wall Street and 99% Movement/
Small Acts of Resistance* 121-151
GUESTS - Occupy Poughkeepsie OR Activist Jim Clune
Citizen Clip - Christopher Hedges on Occupy/Arrest

March 14 **SPRING BREAK** - read/review *Mountains Beyond Mountains*.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN UNITED STATES

March 21
**TEXT** - *The Long Haul* OR *Mountains Beyond Mountains*
Myles Horten and the Highlander Folk School/Equality/Method of learning

Citizen Clip - Bernardo - Prisoners & Imprisoned/Psychology of Power/Soldiers and Abusive acts/Psychology of torture/Abu Ghraib
**MEDIA** - Bloody Sunday – John Lewis, Eyes on the Prize

March 28
**TEXT** - *The Long Haul* OR *Mountains Beyond Mountains*
**MEDIA** - The Promised Land - Resurrection City/Occupy Lafayette Square/
Occupy Congress Occupations/Children's Defense Fund

April 4
**TEXT** - "The Power of the Powerless" - Vaclav Havel OR "Letter from Birmingham Jail" - MLK
Cesar Chavez – Farm workers Boycott/Marshall Ganz
**MEDIA** - "Fight in the Fields"/Cesar's public fast
**MEDIA** - America's "Haitian Crisis"/Randall Robinson's public fast

Solidarity movement in Poland/Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia/Berlin wall comes down/Singing revolution Estonia/Dissidents - Vaclav Havel and the Plastic People (counter-culture musicians)

April 11
**TEXT** - *Prisoner without a Name, Cell Without a Number* OR *Not for Sale*
Citizen Clip: Jacobo Timmerman
**MEDIA** - 60M Argentina’s Dirty War
**MEDIA** – CNN Freedom Project – FORM OF RESISTANCE

Citizen Clip - Bernardo - Prisoners & Imprisoned/Psychology of Power/Soldiers and Abusive acts/Psychology of torture/Abu Ghraib
Political prisoners-of-conscience/Chinese dissidents – LiU Xiaobo/Tiananmen Square/Tank-Man/Nobel Peace Laureates
**MEDIA** - The Lady (Aung San Suu Kyi)
**SONG**

April 18 **TEXT** - *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* OR *Not for Sale*
Citizen Clip - 60M Argentina’s Dirty War/Jacobo Timerman
  grandmothers demonstration/mothers’ white scarf weekly
  vigil/demonstration Madras de plaza de Mayo/Guatemalan death
  squads/Sister Diana Ortiz/Chile - U.S. backed assassination of President
  Salvador Allende/El Salvador - "kill a priest"

Citizen Clip - School of Assassins/School of the Americas

April 25
TEXT - How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs, and the Power of New Ideas
MEDIA - "The New Heroes"/KIVA/Micro-Lending - Yunus Muhammad/Fair Trade, Bill Drayton
  - Social Entrepreneurs

SONG

May 2 -
TEXT - How to Change the World
MEDIA - Conversation: Dr. Paul Farmer and liberationist Gustavo Gutierrez
"Where do we go from Here?"

May 9
Significant moments/learning/insights from texts/media/discourse/citizen project
Public Presentations
SONG - Stand By Me

"Resistance is found in those sometimes brief exceptional lives that stand in every culture
and time...who say their simple NO, and often die for it....

"Resistance is knowing that to be true to anything human we must at times face the stigma of
being an outsider....

"Resistance is the wounds suffered day after day in the struggle to remain human and to
vindicate life...to resist the canker & spur & itch towards violence....

"It is leaving the comfortable circle, following the first serious step as a consequence, the first
march, the first legal jeopardy, the first trial....And everything serious after....

"The ante for this resistance is often prison, exile, the edge....

"Let us make no mistake, the price of refusal, the price of resistance is grievous beyond
bearing."

Daniel Berrigan, priest, poet, resister, prisoner
Street child in Calcutta, coloring for the first time
Calcutta Children’s Project 2011