Happiness lies in conquering one’s enemies, in driving them in front of oneself, in taking their property, in savoring their despair, in outraging their wives and daughters.  
Genghis Khan

Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people. To destroy this invisible government, to befoul the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics is the first task of statesmanship of the day.

Theodore Roosevelt, 1906

The battle...has to begin here. In America. The only institution more powerful than the U.S. government is American civil society. The rest of us are subjects of slave nations. We are by no means powerless, but you have the power of proximity. You have access to the Imperial Palace and the Emperor’s chambers. Empire’s conquests are being carried out in your name.

Arundhati Roy

It always seems impossible until it’s done.

Nelson Mandela

...But there come times—perhaps this is one of them—when we have to take ourselves more seriously or we die; when we have to pull back from the incantations, rhythms we’ve moved to thoughtlessly, and disen thrall ourselves, bestow ourselves to silence, or a severer listening....

Adrienne Rich

Peace is a virtue
War is a loss.
That’s my opinion,
But I ain’t the boss.

Owen Fagan, age 10

The problems we face today...are human-created problems which can be resolved through
Learning goals

- to explore critiques of war and methods of overcoming it.
- to locate war and peace issues in the larger frameworks of adversary and mutuality paradigms and the possibility of a fundamental shift from one paradigm to the other
- to appreciate the role of emotions in institutional behavior: institutions and the world as stages for acting out inner struggles and impulses
- to understand the connections and continuities between inner conflict and societal conflict
- to grasp the role of what is now the global political economic system in making war plausible and seemingly necessary
- to fathom the role of normative masculinity in underlying and sustaining war
- to learn visions and theories of peace

Framework

Until about twenty-seven years ago, the nuclear threat and the Cold War defined much of the consciousness of thoughtful American people about war after World War II. In the early 1980s, President Reagan declared that nuclear war might be necessary and that this country would survive it. Due to peace movements here and in Europe, Gorbachev’s decision to end Soviet domination of the former “satellites” in Eastern Europe, and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union, the threat abated, even though it is not over. The US is now the only “superpower” in the world. Nationalism, racism, ethnicity, terrorism, religion, social class, climate change, women’s rights, sexual orientation, immigration, and issues like size of government, welfare, poverty, “crime,” and “family values” are replacing the Cold War as loci of opposition and hatred in the world.

Or is the old Cold War being repackaged for this era in the form of United States at loggerheads with Russia? Iran? Islam? Who gains what from the painful, bizarre tensions between the US and other countries, religions, and movements? What is the aftermath of the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq? What was the US doing in those two countries in the first place? What prices have who paid for those wars? Who pays? What is the US role in the Syrian civil war? The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians? Egypt?

On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorism struck the US in an unprecedented way. Is terrorism a form of war? Something other than war? A continuation of war? Can we understand its meaning and figure out how to move past it, or are we doomed to eternal vigilance, massive government surveillance, frequent military actions to curb or stop terrorism, and chronic attacks from shadowy terrorist organizations and individuals? What uses does our government make of the terrorist threat and why? What lies behind terrorism and our government’s response to it? Are governments, including ours, terrorists under certain
circumstances? If so, how and why is that widely ignored?

Have war and violence always been part of human society, or are they historically limited and possible only under certain conditions? What of aggression and “human nature”? Is peace only a pipe-dream? Is ending terrorism, whether initiated by ad hoc groups or governments, just a wistful wish? Is there only one viable world view?

In the field of peace studies, a distinction is made between “negative peace,” or absence of war, and “positive peace,” the end of structural conditions (such as imperialism, social class, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and environmental degradation) that promote violence on many levels and that prevent most people on our planet from living full and gratifying lives.

Another useful distinction is between “war culture” and “peace culture.” The former refers to all cultural elements, material and otherwise, that assume and support the war paradigm, the assumption that war is a permanent part of human existence. “Peace culture” is all cultural elements, material and otherwise, that assume and support a peace paradigm, the assumption that war is not inevitable and that peace is possible.

The course will consider the state of war in the world now and will explore structural conditions that perpetuate misery and discontent and will also examine social psychological and gender issues that help explain the persistence of war. It suggests that fundamental changes are possible in how societies are organized and how conflicts are addressed. The basic method we will pursue is “paradigm shift analysis,” which will unfold early in the semester.

Format of the course

The class will meet as a whole twice a week for 80 minutes (Tuesday and Friday, 11:00-12:20) in Pearlman Lounge. Lecture and discussion will be combined, and there will be some videos, films, and possibly guest speakers. We will ordinarily analyze as fully and critically as we can the reading for each week and related topics.

There will be a TA-led discussion section of an additional 50 minutes each week—attendance is required—to examine course materials, reactions, etc. more fully than is possible in class. Students will have several options as to when to take this section.

The class is asked to engage in “cooperative learning,” with students working in groups of two or more to study, write, and prepare together. See below for a fuller discussion of the problems and virtues of cooperative learning.

Practicum

There may be a practicum offered for this course, but if so, it will be next semester. Students opting to take it will earn two course credits. It will be led by the professor possibly assisted by a TA. It will meet at least one hour per week and is to involve three more hours per student per week in practicum work. The meeting time will
depend on participants’ schedules.

*Peace Vigil*

Please, if your schedule allows, attend the Friday 20 minute peace vigil (12:20-12:40) held every week, at the peace monument/circle.

Since it is not for us to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, all the more surely what we contemporaries have to do is the uncompromising critical evaluation of all that exists, uncompromising in the sense that our criticism fears neither its own results nor the conflict with the powers that be.

Karl Marx

*Written and other requirements.* ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE, WRITTEN AND OTHERWISE, MUST BE COMPLETED IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.

1) **Response papers.** These will be 3 of these during the semester. They are to be rather short (3-5 pages), to be written cooperatively, and to deal with issues raised in the readings, class sessions, media, etc. What is expected in these papers and their due dates appears later in this syllabus.

2) **Cooperative learning.** In an effort to create mutuality within our classroom and discussion sections, students will be required to write papers in pairs. If this is a new experience, so be it. TAs and the instructor will do their best to help facilitate this way of working. Students will be required also to write final papers in groups of two or more. If you are convinced you cannot learn to, or bear to, write with others, please do not take this course.

3) There will be a final take-home assignment covering the topics and materials of the course directed at integrating them and exploring the student’s relationship with them. Although it will not require non-assigned reading and can include anything beyond the reading list that students deem relevant, the final work is to focus primarily on the texts and ideas of the course. Students must write these papers in cooperative learning groups.

4) **There will be extra-curricular programs on campus related to the topic of the course.** Students are required to attend at least three and, as part of the final assignment, to submit a paragraph describing each event, its relation to our course, your assessment of the event, and what you learned from it.

5) Students, TAs, and the professor are asked to commit themselves to attend class regularly, keep up with the assignments, and work with each other to improve the course where any of them find it lacking.

6) **The course challenges many preconceptions about war, peace, oneself, and society.** As we want to cover much and work well together,
attendance in class and in discussion group meetings is most strongly urged and expected, as are preparation and participation. If you find the class dissatisfying in any ways, please take the responsibility to let the instructor and/or TAs know, so that we can try to address your concerns. Stopping coming to class because you have issues with it is not an acceptable alternative.

Every breath his senses shall draw, every act and every shadow and thing in all creation, is a mortal poison, or is a drug, or is a signal or symptom, or is a teacher, or is a liberator, or is liberty itself, depending entirely upon his understanding; and understanding, and action proceeding from understanding and guided by it, is the one weapon against the world’s bombardment, the one medicine, the one instrument by which liberty, health, and joy may be shaped or shaped toward, in the individual and in the race.

James Agee

Required readings

BOOKS


Stephen J. Ducat, The Wimp Factor, Beacon, 2005

Gordon Fellman, Rambo and the Dalai Lama, SUNY Press, 1998

Robert Holmes and Barry Gan, Nonviolence in Theory and Practice, Waveland Press, 2012, Third Edition. NB: If you use the second edition, the texts will be there but the page numbers will differ from those posted below. Search by author and article title.

Mark Kurlansky, Nonviolence, Modern Library, 2006

Thich Nhat Hanh, Peace Is Every Step, Bantam, 1992

Daniel Quinn, Ishmael, Bantam, 1995


Nick Turse, Kill Anything that Moves, Picador, 2013

CHAPTERS AND ARTICLES, on LATTE or links on syllabus

Smedley Butler, *War is a Racket*. Can be downloaded free: http://ia600308.us.archive.org/16/items/WarIsARacket/WarIsARacket.pdf

Mark Twain, “The War Prayer” Can be downloaded free: http://warprayer.org/

*Schedule of Readings*

[RP = response paper due. Say what you want to say in any way that makes sense to you, shows real struggle with our course materials, and is intelligible to readers.]

Please read a short section or two of Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace is Every Step* every day throughout the course. We will periodically talk about what you find of value in TNH and what you find problematic.

Week 1,   F 8/26   First class. Introduction to the course.

What war really is

Week 2:  T 8/30   Turse, Introduction, chs. 1 and 5.
  F 9/2   Turse, chs. 6 and 7, Epilogue, Afterword

Theoretical perspective

Week 3:  T 9/6   Fellman, Foreword and Parts I and II  (The film analyses are illustrative; ignore them if they do nothing for you.)
  F 9/9   Fellman, Part IV, chs. 11-14

Week 4:  T 9/13    Fellman, chs. 15-17
  F 9/16   Mark Twain, “The War Prayer”:
          http://www.quanta-gaia.org/MarkTwain/warPrayer.html;
          Butler, “War is a Racket”:
          http://www.scuttlebuttsmallchow.com/racket.html

RP #1, on weeks 1-4. Please write your own questions for response papers, covering Turse, Fellman, Twain, and Butler in this one. Due 9/20.

Non-violence in theory and action

Week 5:  T 9/20   H & G, Mohandas Gandhi on Satyagraha, pp. 83-87
  F 9/23   H & G, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, chs. 5-8

Week 6:   T 9/27   NO CLASS (B Monday)
F 9/30  H & G, Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience,” pp. 55-70
         H & G, Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail,”
         pp. 104-116; Kurlansky, chs. 1-6

Week 7:  T 10/4  NO CLASS: holiday
F 10/7  H & G, Women and nonviolence. pp. 117-172
         (Daube, Bacon, Deming, Norman, and Ruddick)
         Kurlansky, chs. 7-11

Sunday, 10/9 Compassionate Listening Workshop, 9-1, required. Location TBA.

Week 8:  T 10/11  Marshall Rosenberg, Nonviolent Communication, pp. 1-43
         The US, the World Order and Violence
F 10/14  Chomsky, Introduction, chs. 1-5

RP #2, on wks 5-8. See if you can combine what you learned in the Compassionate
Listening Workshop with what we read in Gandhi, Thoreau, King, and Rosenberg. Due
10/18.

Week 9:  T 10/18  Chomsky, chs. 6-12
F 10/21  Chomsky, chs. 13-15
         Movie in class: Pray the Devil Back to Hell

Week 10: T 10/25  Chomsky, chs. 16-23
         Animals, meat, and sex
         H & G, Gary Francione, “Nonviolence and Animal Rights,”
         pp. 326-331

Week 11: T 11/1  Adams, ch. 1 (LATTE)
F 11/4   Adams, ch. 2 (LATTE)

RP#3. How do the chapters in the Sexual Politics of Meat connect with the other readings

What does masculinity have to do with it?

Week 12:  T 11/8  We will be joined by Prof. Mari Fitzduff, founder of the
         Brandeis MA program in Coexistence and Conflict. She was a
         major figure in the non-violent resolution of the Protestant-
         Catholic conflict in Ireland. Meanwhile, read Ducat, Preface,
         Introduction, and chs. 1-3. We will not discuss Ducat until 11/11
and 11/15

F 11/11 Ducat, chs. 4-5

Week 13: T 11/15 Ducat, chs. 6-8

Nonviolence in Europe, South Africa, and the Middle East


Finale: a critical look at the basic Western narrative

Week 14: T 11/22 Quinn, pp. 1-91

F 11/25 THANKSGIVING VACATION

Week 15 T 11/29 Quinn, pp. 95-148

F 12/2 Quinn, pp. 151-207

Week 16 T 12/6 Quinn, pp. 211-254. Conclusion of the course.

There will be no response paper for weeks 11-16; rather, the texts assigned will be covered in the take-home final assignment.

THE FINAL PAPER WILL BE DUE MONDAY, DEC. 12 BY 5 PM. SEND ELECTRONICALLY TO THE PROFESSOR AND TO EACH TA AS THEY SPECIFY. SEE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS NEAR THE END OF THE SEMESTER.

GRADING STANDARDS

The course assumes serious interest in its topic and does not assume background in the subject, sociology, social psychology, or peace studies. The premium is on understanding and working with the concepts and readings of the course and on thinking creatively with them. Real learning involves risk and re-thinking assumptions and familiar paradigms (with no preordained or “right” outcome of this process) as well as learning new information, ideas, and world views. We will pay attention to such matters as involvement, keeping up with the reading, attendance, and particularly in discussion sections, participation. All students are encouraged to take active part in the larger class, but we respect that some people are reluctant to do so.

A—mastery of readings, concepts, and exercises; full participation, engagement, risk-taking, and growth; grappling with the course and coming to your own insights about its issues, its implications, its relation to yourself.
B—clear understanding of course materials and conscientious participation but little evidence of risk-taking and growth or grappling with the course toward one's own insights.

C—fuzzy, incomplete, lethargic relationship with course materials, minimal involvement of self in course, little risk-taking and growth, no insights of one’s own.

D—same as C but moreso.

E—trying to wing it by leaning too much on others’ understanding, not writing papers fully germane to the readings and central concepts of the course, erratic participation, not completing all course requirements, etc.

RESPONSE PAPERS

A course goal is to have a conversation going among all of us—students, TAs, and professor. One way to do this is through written reflections on course materials. Toward that end, we ask you to work together in groups or two or more. Here is what we have in mind:

1. It is well to learn to write succinctly. Practice getting to the point quickly and saying what you mean. The papers should be held to about 3-5 pages, although if you really get caught up in something and wish to do so, you may negotiate for more.

2. If you find the reading difficult, summarizing it to get ahold of it can be useful. This means you are asking if your interpretation of the author makes sense to the reader. Do not restate what the author said. Quotations may be used to illustrate a point or ask a question, and we urge you to work directly from the texts, but do not just repeat the author or quote extensively; write in your own words.

3. Remember that all reading is interpretation. We never focus on it all, we never comprehend it all, and we do not know exactly what the author had in mind. Nor does that matter. What matters is what the reader makes of what is read.

4. If you are comfortable with the reading, explore your questions, your critical reactions, your hesitations, reservations, etc. And most important: your own insights. Strive to make connections among readings with central ideas and issues in the course, with your own understanding of the world, and your reactions to what you see in society and in your own life.

5. The premium is on showing the reader that you are grappling with the course materials, have opened yourself up to the possibility that there is something in them for you, and can think creatively with them. The premium also is on integrating what may seem like disparate materials, and struggling to make sense of them in your reality as a citizen and a thinking, feeling, viable actor in society as well as in your reality as a
student taking a course.

6. In response papers, you may work with class discussions, professor's and TAs' views, world events, whatever, but always in the context of the readings. I.e., no riffing from the top of your head on interesting things that may be relevant to the course. That is, of course, easy to do in sociology classes but is not helpful. We are looking for real struggle with course materials.

7. Pay attention to the process of working together, and work with your section, your TA, and/or the professor on any problems you have in cooperative learning. This comes easily to some people and with very great difficulty to others. Accept where you begin and struggle on from there, drawing on help if, when, and as you wish it. Cooperative learning is meant to be a part of peace culture.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see the instructor immediately.

Four-Credit Course (with three hours of class-time per week)

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).