COEXISTENCE 250:
The Arts of Building Peace
Spring, 2006

PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS AND CALENDAR

Instructor:
Cynthia Cohen, Ph.D.
Director, Coexistence Research and International Collaborations

Contact Information:
Office: ASAC (Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex) 3rd Floor
Phone: 781-736-2133
Emergencies: 781-405-5067 (cell)
Email: cecohen@brandeis.edu

Office hours:
Most Thursdays, 1:30 – 3 and by appointment
Schedule directly or with Jennifer Burke: jkburke@brandeis.edu
X65001

Class:
Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. (may be adjusted at first class session)
ASAC Room 209

* Indicates that all or part of the class session will be open to the campus community.

NOTE: THIS IS A DRAFT SYLLABUS AND IS SUBJECT TO REVISION

Introduction

COEX 250: The Arts of Building Peace is an exploration of the creative dimensions of peacebuilding practice and the contributions of cultural work and the arts to coexistence, conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Why a course that explores the relationships among coexistence, cultural work and the arts? Throughout the world, artists, cultural workers and peacebuilding practitioners are incorporating the arts in efforts to strengthen relationships across difference and build a culture of peace. They work in and with a wide array of genres – music, literature, theater, visual arts, storytelling, digital art and broadcast media and folk expressions of all kinds. Projects are intended to accomplish different goals, such as helping enemies perceive each other's humanity, helping survivors recover from trauma, supporting people to mourn losses, to empathize with each others suffering, to address injustices and to imagine a new future. They involve people as creators, performers, audience members, and critics. Some peacebuilding cultural work and arts projects operate in single neighborhoods; some are international in scope. Some are highly effective, some less so. Although there is a great deal of activity in this field, very little has been written that gives an overview, or assesses what comprises excellent work in this area, or would help policy-makers or practitioners understand the range of contributions (and the limitations) of interventions that incorporate the arts and cultural work. Rarely do the artist-peacebuilders who design such projects have the opportunity to reflect on them, to assess them honestly, and to explore the ethical questions that emerge from this kind of practice. Rarely do they understand the larger peace-building field or work in coordination with other players.

This course is an early attempt to fill some of these gaps. On a theoretical level, the course will introduce you to a range of concepts emerging from three different fields: 1) peacebuilding; 2) the arts and aesthetic theory; and 3) cultural work and community development. We will explore the theoretical and practical terrain where these three fields overlap, focusing in particular on John Paul Lederach's concept of **the moral imagination** and its centrality to effective peacebuilding.

On the level of practice, the course will also introduce you to the work of a number of artist/peacebuilders and their activities, and provide you with the opportunity to work with a group to design a creative project or initiative in collaboration with ngo's on the ground in conflict regions.

COEX 250:The Arts of Building Peace is part of a larger inquiry at Brandeis called 'Creative Approaches to Coexistence and Reconciliation.' Through this connection, you will have the opportunity to read and reflect on drafts of case studies that are being produced by the most recent round of Brandeis International Fellows – artist/peacebuilders working in Cambodia, South Africa, Burundi, New Zealand and Sri

Lanka. You will also be able to contribute to the second Brandeis Intercultural Residency Series, which is bringing to the campus Sol Y Canto, a musical ensemble that features the songs of South America's Nueva Cancion Movement. Also, some of the work you produce in this course can be published on **Creative Resources for Coexistence and Reconciliation,** a virtual resource center we are developing to house this inquiry. We will discuss these connections in class.

Course Goals

The Arts of Building Peace engages students in exploring the actual and potential contributions of the arts and cultural work to peacebuilding theory and practice, and supports them to learn the tools to design and assess arts- and culture-based peacebuilding initiatives.

Students will:

1) understand the concept of the 'moral imagination,' and the significance of creativity to peacebuilding practice
2) gain an overview of the range of contributions of arts and cultural work to peace work, in relation to different kinds and stages of conflict, including non-violent struggles for justice, conflict transformation, community development, coexistence and reconciliation
3) become aware of the peacebuilding possibilities and limitations of different genres, such as music, visual arts, theatre, ritual, film and broadcast arts, digital arts, poetry, narrative, memorials, etc.
4) learn to think creatively and realistically about the design and evaluation of artistic and cultural projects in communities in conflict
5) explore key ethical questions and dilemmas that arise when working at the intersersection of peacebuilding, cultural work and the arts.

Course Requirements

1) Active participation in class discussions and exercises (10% of grade)
2) Active participation in *Sol Y Canto* Residency at Brandeis by designing and conducting one outreach activity and contributing to evaluation by attending and reflecting on at least two events (5% of grade) – Observation notes due February 15.
3) Research or creative/reflective project on topic of student's choice (35%)
   - January 25th: initial brainstorm possible topics
   - March 1: 2-page project proposal, including:
   - April 26th: in-class presentation and deadline for turning in drafts of reports or reflections if you would like written feedback.
   - May 8th: Final projects due
4) Creativity, the moral imagination and building peace: interviewing an artist-peacebuilder (25%) –

- In-class presentation February 15
- Written reports due March 1

5) Designing coexistence interventions: group projects (25%)
   - Presentation of concept paper, creative presentation and workplan due April 12

Course Policies

Attendance is required at all class sessions. Because everyone's learning in the class is contingent on the contributions of other members, please ask to be excused only cases of serious health or other emergencies. If you are unable to attend class, please let me know ahead of time if at all possible.

On a few occasions, I have scheduled workshops or attendance at events outside of class sessions. Please make every effort to come – these events will contribute to your understanding of the arts and other aspects of our inquiry. Your attendance at these events could help boost your final grade; but I won't reduce your grade if you are unable to attend.

You are welcome to confer with each other on papers and class presentations. Writing, however, should be your own. Please be sure to credit the source of any ideas borrowed from or inspired by others.

There may be opportunities to publish some of your work from this class on the website of the 'Creative Approaches to Coexistence and Reconciliation' inquiry. Such publication would be entirely at your discretion.

Note: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you, please see the instructor before the second session of class.

Required Texts

Lederach, John Paul. *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*. Oxford University Press, 2005

Schirch, Lisa. *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*. Kumarian Press, 2004

Cohen, Cynthia. *Creative Approaches to Reconciliation* and *Engaging with the Arts to Promote Coexistence*. Available on-line at http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/articles/

Working papers and portfolios of Brandeis International Fellows in the *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts* Fellowship Program, available on-line at htthp://www.brandeis.edu/go/CreateCoexistence (working papers and portfolios).

Students with little prior background in coexistence, peacebuilding or conflict resolution should read: Fisher, et al, *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*. Zed books, 2003. A copy will be on reserve in the library.

Additional articles, videos, scripts and events noted in the calendar below.

COEX 250: THE ARTS OF BUILDING PEACE
Spring, 2006

Calendar of Class Sessions and Assignments

Session 1: January 18
Introductions, Class time, Overview of the course
Peacebuilding/Arts and Aesthetics/Cultural Work: Three Discourses, Key Concepts
Review of the syllabus and assignments

Session 2: January 25
Moral Imagination, Conflict Stages, Contributions of Arts to Reconciliation
Review Brainstorm Lists for Culminating Projects
Review Sol Y Canto and Interview Assignments

Turn in Brainstorm Lists for Culminating Projects

Texts:
- Lederach, The Moral Imagination, Chapters 1 – 4
- Cohen, Creative Approaches to Reconciliation, http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/articles/
- Fisher, et al, Working With Conflict, Chapters 1- 3 (on reserve)

*Session 3: February 1
Guest artist: Wen-ti Tsen, visual artist
Artist as Mediator – Creating a "Forgiving Space"

Texts:
- Lederach, The Moral Imagination, Chapters 5 – 10
- Cohen, Engaging with the Arts to Promote Coexistence, http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/articles/ (see especially section on Wen-ti's work)
- Wen-ti Tsen's submission to the World Trade Center Memorial competition, http://www.wtcsitememorial.org/ent/entI=790966.html (Note: click on the small text to access larger, readable version)

Session 4: February 8
Narrative and Peacebuilding; Assessment/Evaluation of Arts/Peacebuilding Initiatives

Texts:
- Lederach, The Moral Imagination, Chapters 11 – 15

- Cobb, Fostering Coexistence in Identity-based Conflicts: Toward a narrative approach. (On webct)
- Fisher, et al, Working with Conflict, Chapter 9
- Report of the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, Introduction to the English Edition: http://www.usip.org/library/tc/doc/reports/chile/chile_1993_introeng.html

Session 5: February 15
Discuss Observation of *Sol Y Canto* events (Music, Needlework, Poetry, Film)
Verbal reports on interviews with artist/peacebuilders.
Review of Arts Genres: possibilities and limitations

Turn in observation sheets for 2 *Sol Y Canto* events

Texts:
Any two events of the *Sol Y Canto* residency: check http://www.brandeis.edu/MusicUnitesUS/sycsched.html for updated times and locations and additional events

- February 1 – 28, Exhibtion of arpilleras, Women's Studies Resource Center
- Tuesday, February 7, 4:30 p.m., film *In Women's Hands*, Pollack Auditorium
- Thursday, February 9, 12 – 1, open classroom lecture/demo on Nueva Cancion tradition, Slosberg
- Friday, February 10, 9:30 – 10:30 or 11 – 12, Education outreach program, Slosberg
- Friday, February 10, 3:30, panel: Music as Political Action: Oppression and Liberation, Shapiro Campus Center
- Friday, February 10, 5 – 6 p.m. Atrium Concert, Shapiro Campus Center
- Saturday, February 11, 7 – 7:45 Pre-concert lecture at The Rose
- Saturday, February 11, 8 p.m. World Music Concert and reception, Shapiro
- Tuesday, February 14, 1:30 p.m. Gallery talk on arpilleras, Marjorie Agosin, Women's Studies Resource Center.
- Tuesday, February 14, 4:30 p.m., film *Threads of Hope,* Pollack Auditorium

BREAK

Session 6: March 1
Turn in written reports on interviews with artist/peacebuilders
Deadline for turning in 2-page proposals for final projects

Designing Arts/Peacebuilding Initiatives
Review Design Assignment

Session 7: March 8
*Guest Artist: Catherine Filloux (Theatre)
Cambodian context

Texts:

- Ly Daravuth, Notes on Pchum Ben, at http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/papers/index.html
- Ly Daravuth, Where is Reconciliation? At http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/portfolios/index.html
- Catherine Filloux, Ten Gems on a Thread (available on webct)
- Catherine Filloux, Photographs from S-21
- Lindsay French, Outsider Art in the Aftermath of Violence (available on webct)
- Lindsay French, Exhibiting Terror

Optional texts:

- Catherine Filloux, Eyes of the Heart
- Catherine Filloux, Silence of God

Session 8: March 15
Community Cultural and Economic Development
Case Study: Artist Proof Studio, South Africa

Texts:

- Kim Berman, Artist Proof Studio: A Journey of Reconciliation, on–line at http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/papers/kim/
- Adams and Goldbard, Community, Culture and Globalization, in book by that title

Session 9: March 22
Art and Civic Dialogue (Film, Theatre, Opera)
Retributive and Restorative Justice
Guest Presenter: Sister Helen Prejean, Author of 'Dead Man Walking', USA (campus lecture begins at 7 p.m.)

Texts:

- View video: *Dead Man Walking*
- Explore website of Sister Helen Prejean (http://www.prejean.org/)
- Explore webiste of Dead Man Walking School Theatre Play Project (http://www.dmwplay.org/)

Session 10: March 29
Ritual, Theatre and Reconciliation

Case Study: Rhythm of Reconciliation, Burundi
Case Study: Playback Theatre as a Resource for Reconciliation, Fiji, India, Angola.

Texts:
Both at http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/vrc/papers/index.html

- Lena Schlachmuijlder, The Rhythm of Reconciliation: A reflection on drumming as a contribution to reconciliation processes in Burundi and South Africa
- Jenny Hutt and Bev Hosking, Playback Theatre: A Creative Resource for Reconciliation

*Session 11: April 5
Ritual and Peacebuilding
Guest presenter: Lisa Schirch

Texts:

- Schirch, Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding, Chapters 1,2, 5, 6 and 10; and one of the following, to be assigned in class: Chapter 7, 8, 9

Session 12: April 12
Integrating Cases, Presenters, Readings
Presentations of Designs for Creative Approaches Initiatives

Turn in Group Design Projects: Concept papers, powerpoint presentations and work plans

BREAK

Session 13: April 26
Workshops and Reports on Final Projects

Deadline for turning in drafts of research projects or reflections on creative projects if you want feedback prior to submitting final projects.

Monday, May 8: Research and Creative/Reflective Projects Due by 5 p.m.