

Political Science 230

Introduction to the Study of Peace

Spring, 2016, TTh 12-1:15 pm

Harry Targ

Beering 2230

Office Hours TTh 10:30-11:55 am and by appointment

494-4169

Targ@purdue.edu

Introduction

One of the enduring crises in world affairs is the perpetuation of violence, war and inhumane treatment of peoples resulting from economic, political, social, and cultural institutions as well as from psychological factors. In response to the seeming perpetuation of institutionalized cruelty, activists, scholars, persons from religious traditions and others engaged in education began to study and promote “peace.”

Particularly, since World War II (in the twentieth century sixty million people died directly from two world wars) scholar/activist communities began to encourage “peace education,” “peace studies,” and “peace research.” Over the last sixty years such efforts have grown enormously. Now over 200 universities have Peace Studies programs. There are international associations devoted to researching issues of war and peace. National associations exist to promote peace education and research.

With the continuation of international and domestic violence, the spread of nuclear and conventional weapons, growing poverty and economic inequality, and apocalyptic changes in the environment, many peace educators have begun to reconceptualize the core concept in the field: “peace.” Some peace educators continue to concentrate on the war problem while others include in their studies worker exploitation, sexism and racism, homophobia, other violations of human rights, and threats to the environment. In short, peace studies involves “direct violence” (war) and “structural violence” (institutional exploitation and oppression) and ways to overcome these; “negative peace” (ending war) and “positive peace” (creating economic, social and environmental justice).

The Course

This course is about the pursuit of peace (in the broad sense) and explanations about its absence. It is interdisciplinary encompassing political science, history, psychology, sociology, child development, philosophy, literature and the arts, and the sciences. There will be lectures from the instructor. Occasionally, lectures will be supplemented by guest speakers. Since class size is modest, a significant portion of the course will be devoted to class discussion and debate, about readings, about videos, about the experiences and knowledge of class participants. Every class member is expected to participate and will have valuable experiences and knowledge to contribute.

It is important to note that a variety of views will be expressed and students will be required to reflect on views articulated but no one is obliged to agree with the professor, with videos, or with guests. One of the exciting features of peace studies is that it challenges us all to reflect in new ways about old problems. Even if we reject some of the new ideas, we can do so on a more rigorous intellectual basis.

Class will consist of lectures and/or video presentations mostly on Tuesdays. Thursday classes will be based on discussion of the week's readings and presentations (and relevant unfolding world events). Groups of students (probably three each week) will be asked to open discussion on Thursdays with brief comments on reading assignments, videos, and lectures. In addition students will be asked to list questions they believe we all should discuss. (All of us should look at the study questions at the end of each chapter of the Barash book). Panelists are encouraged to use power point outlines for their presentations and to make the materials available for posting on Blackboard Learn.

Students will be asked to write two essay examinations on materials from the course. These examinations will be scheduled roughly during week 7 and during the final examination period. Examinations will consist of two questions requiring reference to texts, lectures, videos, and course discussions.

Finally, students will be asked to attend one public lecture on a subject relevant to peace studies and one film screening (of three that will be announced) during the semester. Students will be asked to prepare five-page

papers on the lecture and the film, describing the substance of the lecture/video and explaining how it relates to the substance of the course.

The final grade will be compiled on the basis of grades in the two exams (25% each), the two short papers (25% total) and class participation/discussion (25%). Course attendance is required and five absences will lead to a half grade deduction.

Texts (available, can be ordered at Von's Book Store in West Lafayette)

Marc Pilisuk, and Jennifer Achord Rountree, *The Hidden Structure of Violence*, Monthly Review, 2015.

David P. Barash, *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies*, Oxford, 2013, 3rd edition.

Also check out Blackboard Learn for Power Point outlines of lectures, links to videos, and other materials posted by the instructor.

*Schedule: Readings**

Week 1: Introduction to Peace Studies

Week 2: On War: Impacts and Causes
MP Chapters 1-2*

Week 3: Classical Approaches to War
Barash, Chapter 1*

Week 4: On Terrorism and Other Violence
Barash, Chapter 3*

Week 5: Structural Violence: Political Economy of War
MP, chapters 3-4*

Week 6: War: Violence and Politics
MP, chapters 5*

Week 7: Big Powers and Realpolitik
MP, chapter 6*, first examination

Week 8: Negative Peace

Barash, chapter 2*

Week 9: Positive Peace

Barash, chapter 4*

Week 10: Media and Consciousness

MP. chapter 7*

Week 11: Values and Beliefs

MP. chapter 8*

Week 12: Non-violence

Barash, chapter 5, pp 245-258*

Week 13: Movements for Change

Barash, chapters 6, pp. 285-302

Week 14: Movements for Change

Barash, chapter 6, pp. 303-320 *

Week 15: The Future

MP. Chapter 9

Possible video showings in class include:

- Robert Fisk speech
- Images of the Enemy
- Life and Debt
- Why We Fight
- Marc Pilisuk video presentation at Purdue University
- Interview with Utah Phillips
- Gandhi mobilizing against the salt tax in India
- Rethinking Afghanistan
- Howard Zinn: Let the People Speak
- Interviews with David Harvey and Johan Galtung