

Civil Resistance and Social Change

Sociology and Psychology 492P-01
UMass, Amherst, Fall Semester, 09/03 – 12/11/2019

Machmer Hall Room W-22
Mondays and Wednesdays 4.00-5:15 PM

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- *Journal of Resistance Studies, resistance-journal.org
- *Department of Sociology and Work Science, University of Gothenburg
- *Resistance Studies Network, resistancestudies.org

OVERVIEW & LEARNING GOALS

This course deals with campaigns of “nonviolent direct action,” “people power,” “unarmed insurrection,” or “color revolutions,” and apply sociological perspectives to the causes, effects, and dynamics of resistance in political and non-institutional resistance mobilizations. We focus on how organized, strategic, and mass-mobilized popular resistance sometimes brings about significant social change, while recognizing how resistance also spawn its own forms of domination. We use movies with case examples from different continents of the world, dealing with very different issues, which we then analyze together. The main student assignment is to write a paper that utilizes an analytical framework provided at the course on one campaign of your own choice (through the *Swarthmore Global Nonviolent Action Database*).

In recent years it has become increasingly obvious how ordinary people, within mass mobilizations of protests and resistance of different kind are able to overthrow governments, without using military means. We have seen how racist dictatorships have fallen (as in South Africa), as well as communist authoritarian regimes (as in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union), and military dictatorships (as in several South American states, e.g. Chile and Bolivia). We have also seen how major reforms have been implemented against structural violence and legalized injustices within liberal democracies (as e.g. racist segregation in the Southern states of USA). However, some of these mobilizations have encountered hard obstacles and protracted violent conflicts, with few or any achievements (as in e.g. Palestine, China, Syria, Egypt, Western Sahara,

Tibet). Others have overthrown their government in sudden transitions, only to find themselves within an even worse authoritarian regime than before (as in Iran), while others have succeeded to create a fundamentally more democratic and just society after a series of smaller challenges and reforms over longer periods (as in Scandinavia).

This course applies sociological perspectives on the 'resistance' that is played out in political and non-institutional mobilizations: its causes, effects and dynamics. In what way does organized, strategic and mass mobilized popular resistance bring about change, or reproduce domination?

By the end of the course you should, based on your learning from the literature and class discussions:

- show ability to read a larger text material and extract the main points claimed by different authors.
- recognize key features of nonviolent action or civil resistance when you encounter it in public discourse or media reports.
- understand the differences between key concepts such as nonviolent action, protest, direct action, civil disobedience, contentious politics and social movements.
- be familiar with several different theoretical frameworks that try to explain the movement mobilization of civil resistance.
- understand how it is possible to explain why civil resistance might be utilized effectively against authoritarian regimes.
- recognize some different choices activists will have to conduct when it comes to an appropriate tactical and strategic application of civil resistance.
- show ability to critically analyze a case or event involving civil resistance, or someone making an argument in favor or against civil resistance in a particular context, by pointing out some key questions or factors that need to be considered.
- show an ability to make independently written reviews of academic texts, and written papers, which utilize academic texts in a critical reflective way, apply an appropriate style and forms of referencing, and demonstrate theoretically informed discussions.
- demonstrate an acceptable ability to orally present information to an audience of fellow students.

REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS FOR EVERYONE

Always remember to identify yourself: Remember to state your full name and class when you communicate with the instructors via email, handing in papers or in any other way hand in material for the grading of the course. (The only exception is the written evaluations that are done anonymously online).

Active participation in class: This course is organized with a combination of different class meetings (lectures, text seminars, and paper seminars). During text seminars we discuss some key texts together, and during lectures and other types of seminars you will be given supplementary perspectives on the course theme. Therefore, you must complete the required readings of some specified texts before the class meeting for which they are assigned (see schedule below), and it is expected that you actively participate in the discussion of the readings during seminar sessions. In addition to demonstrating an

understanding of the main arguments and themes of the readings, you are encouraged to think critically about the readings (i.e. identify strengths and weaknesses), compare and contrast them to other readings or literatures, and make connections to ongoing social processes and current events.

Text readings (of course literature): This course applies somewhat more texts to read than normal, since one of the course aims is to learn to read extensive: to learn and understand the main concepts, models, claims and theoretical frameworks – without reading everything equally careful. The emphasis is not on remembering details in a smaller collection of texts, rather on your ability to compare, criticize, problematize and discuss differences within the literature, and to form your own positions in relation to that literature. To secure that kind of learning we apply the learning form of seminars with discussions, and lectures that bring in perspectives that supplement the readings.

Text seminar rapporteurs (oral and written): For each of the seminars for which we have required readings, one or more students will be designated as rapporteurs, who are responsible for presenting to the class a concise summary of the main points and arguments of the readings (time limit: 20 minutes). This report also has to be written and copied to everyone in the class as a handout. It can be made in form of definitions of key concepts, quotes of main theses or bullet-points, but need page numbers for all main statements.

Text seminar questions: Each student will have to team up with another student and together hand in a paper with two questions to the seminar (i.e. 2 questions per pair of students). Based on the reading of the required reading for the seminar your question has to be well informed, and one that is *problematizing* statements made in the reading. (It is not accepted to hand in a question that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”, or where the answer can be found on a certain page.) Make copies of your paper with questions to yourself and your team member, as well as one copy to the professor to hand in before the seminar starts (i.e. three copies in total).

Participate at the Resistance Studies Speakers Events: This course is run through the *Resistance Studies Initiative* (RSI) (see <http://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies>). RSI is a special effort by UMass Amherst to promote studies of civil resistance and a resource for both academics and activists. Among the things RSI do we have a Resistance Studies Speakers Series (see <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events/rsi>) when eminent researchers and activists visit and give a talk on resistance relevant themes. The schedule of the talks is part of our class schedule (see below). Everyone in the class is expected to participate at these talks (when they are on class time). The talks are mostly scheduled around our class time, but some of you might have to leave for other classes before the end of the talk, which is of course no problem.

News rapporteurs for “Here are the news” (oral and written performance): News about activism within mainstream media is generally sporadic, misguided, distorted and incomplete. In order to counter that we at several class meetings have a news report of about 10 minutes with a selection of highlights relevant to the course theme. Students, according to an elective schedule, conduct this report function. Making the news report is only possible if you have actively searched for news from activist sites and alternative media outlets using Internet (for some suggested outlets to begin with, see below). You

are supposed to search for relevant news on activism globally that are of interest for the class and that occurred in the time since the last report was given. In this way the class will stay updated on what happens on the activist front. Once the report is done you hand in your notes to the professor (as plain text or keywords in a bullet list). Only when the notes, with full name stated at the top of the paper, are handed in, the assignment is complete.

External Events Rapporteur (oral and written performance): This class happens in a context. There are many civil resistance studies relevant events occurring at the UMass Amherst Campus and outside it during any given semester, so also this year. So, these activities are of relevance to the theme of the class, and in a way, it makes sense for us all to attend all of it. However, that might not be possible, and therefore, to ensure the class get the core ideas from these events, we assign some of us to attend some of the events. Basically, the assignment is to search out relevant events and attend and then report back to the class at the end of the semester (in a written and oral form). The written report should be 2 pages long. Ask the professor for advice if you have any questions of what to choose.

Review essay: Each student is required to choose one recent scholarly book (published the last four years) that falls within the substantive domain of this course, such as a form of resistance, a particular liberation struggle against foreign occupation, or a relevant theoretical issue that link to liberation struggles, and to make a review essay of the book. The book needs approval from the professor before you start to write. Email a description of the content of the book and a link to its website to stellan.vinhagen@gmail.com Since each student need to choose a book someone else has not yet chosen, it is good to be quick in reporting which book you choose. This essay should consist of 3 double spaced pages, and the text shall be evenly distributed with 1/3 of the text (1 page) per section: (1) Summary of the main content and points of the chosen book, (2) Analytical comparison with the mandatory literature at this course, and (3) Your critical reflection of the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen book. The review is due on **Oct 22**.

Course Paper and presentation, and peer-review (oral and written performance): A paper is required on an *unarmed campaign* that falls within the substantive domain of this course. You will have to choose one of the over 1 000 campaigns described in the *Swarthmore Global Nonviolent Action Database*, see <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu> The assignment is to write a longer and more developed analysis based on the one that is presented in the database, by applying an analytical framework (described in a lecture and in a paper). Preferably you add new sources, other theories or perspectives on the case, and you might also, if you find problems, discuss the accuracy of the Database description. You have the opportunity to get direct feedback on your choice if you have one idea to present at the class **Sep 25** (see schedule).

The first step of the work is to hand in a 2-page paper that summarize your topic and includes a preliminary bibliography with at least 5 scholarly sources you plan to use, while also other additional sources are most likely needed (news reports, activist texts, etc.). Scholarly sources are books or articles written by academics and published by university related publishers, with documentation of how the data was gathered, and references to sources throughout the text (included are also reports written in a similar style, published by publishers that are not tied to a political party). This is due at the

beginning of class on **Oct 10**. Those submitting in time (and include their email address on the paper) will get written feedback from the professor.

You can structure your paper in different ways, but at the minimum you need a section on the campaign (history, actors, key events, facts, etc.), a section analyzing the resistance (applying the analytical framework and describe the strategies, tactics, actors, key events, facts, etc.), and a section that discuss the results of the resistance (as a form of conclusion, drawing out achievements, and problems). You have to give references in your text, revealing from where you have the information. Make sure it is clear what is stated in your sources, and what is your own words and interpretation. You can use any style of references, as long as it is systematic, understandable and clear.

A *draft version* of the paper is due on **Nov 22** in an email (for reference you should also include a copy of the Swarthmore Database entry that describes your case). The paper should be double spaced, with between 3 000 and 4 000 words in total, including references. It is absolutely vital to *discuss and refer to the course literature* when relevant.

However, you are NOT supposed to refer to the original Swarthmore entry for your case, except when you are critically discussing its accuracy. The Swarthmore entry is not a source you can use to substantiate your claims, since you will have to base your discussion on the original sources or complementary sources. On the other hand, all course literature that is relevant for the chosen topic should be referred to and discussed.

You have to follow conventional principles of academic honesty and not use any concepts or text (even shorter sections) from other sources without referring to the source (if you copy a sentence it has to be shown as a quote). Failure to follow this basic principle of academic honesty might have severe consequences (see specifications below).

Presentations of drafts will be on **Dec 10** in groups during class (more information later). The presentations should be no more than 15 minutes in length. All students are expected to read all papers of their group before the seminars, and have comments to share.

During the class when papers are presented, the papers will also go through a *peer-review process* in which each student will comment on one paper written by someone else. The peer-reviewing student will (1) give a 5-10 minutes oral review with the main points during the seminar, and (2) make a written peer-review, which will be copied and given to the author. This peer-review shall follow a standard format of academic seminars and journals (including recommendation for publishing or not, and detailed comments for editing). More guidelines on the format for peer-review will be provided in a separate handout later.

With the help of review comments and discussions at the paper seminar at the end of the course, you have *the opportunity to improve and rework your paper one more time* before it gets a grade by your professor. You have until **Dec 17**. NOTE: This is an absolute deadline for the final version of your course Paper. Submit via email to the professor: stellan.vinthagen@gmail.com Late submissions are not accepted. Make sure you get a reply back, confirming the submission of the paper in a readable format.

Students are encouraged to publish their paper in some way. The options are several, as for example at the websites of the Resistance Studies Initiative or Waging Nonviolence, as Working Papers to be published online at UMass, or as a blog postings somewhere. You do not, of course, have to make your text publicly accessible if you do not want! However, the course is an opportunity to write something for a wider audience, if you would like to do that.

EXTRA CREDITS ARE POSSIBLE

There are organizations that work on nonviolent activism in our North East area of the US. You can make a visit to a group and learn about their struggle and write up a report, which can be an important learning experience. The professor can help out with suggestions of places to visit, but the student needs to facilitate the contact and agreement of an appropriate time and form for a learning visit. You will need to write a short report from your visit and what you learnt. More information about this possibility will be provided during the course. If you are interested take contact with the professor.

GRADING

Participation in class discussions.....	15 %
Text Seminar rapporteur	15 %
Text Seminar questions and News rapporteur ...	15 %
Review essay	15 %
Paper, presentation and peer-review of other paper.....	40 %

Higher grading of your performance demands an ability to show – both verbally and in written format – *a critical understanding and application of the core ideas formulated in the course literature and the key themes* of the course. That demands that you read, formulate core ideas of different authors, critically reflect upon their claims and show an ability to draw reasonable conclusions, based on the literature. What that means will be further explained with illustrating examples during class.

IMPORTANT INFO

Some recommended activist news outlets to start with when preparing “Here are the news”:

The primary recommendation is the unique collected sources of news at one site:
<http://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/related-news>

Other sources:
<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/news-and-media>
<http://www.indymedia.org/or/index.shtml> (not very active nowadays, but there are 50+ sites from different countries and cities with updates)
<http://zcomm.org/zmag/>

<http://www.earthtribe.co>
<http://newsactivist.com>
<http://www.trueactivist.com>

Accommodation Statement

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Honesty Statement

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

MANDATORY COURSE TEXTS

In general literature is accessible via the UMass library or can be downloaded online or will be provided by the instructors.

There is however one book you will have to order (Nepstad 2015, see Seminar 4 below) and it is important to do that directly making it possible for you to get it in time. This is marked “NOTE: TO ORDER” in the literature list below. Order for example via <http://used.addall.com>, amazon.com, or amherstbooks.com

Strategic framework for analyzing campaigns

1. Summary of *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*, by Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler. Summary written by Tanya Glaser, Conflict Research Consortium (1 p.) <https://www.beyondintractability.org/bksum/ackerman-strategic>
2. Summary of *The Principles of Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*, by Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler. Summary written by Tanya Glaser, Conflict Research Consortium (1 p.) <https://www.beyondintractability.org/artsum/ackerman-principles>

Optional extra reading: Camilla Håkansson (2007) "Waging Nonviolent Struggle - The Importance of Having a Strategy", Vaxjo University. <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:205502/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

Seminar 1:

1. Schock, Kurt (2003) "Nonviolent Action and Its Misconceptions: Insights for Social Scientists", *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Oct., 2003), pp. 705-712. Published by: American Political Science Association. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3649265>
2. Edelman, Marc (2001) "Social Movements: Changing Paradigms and Forms of Politics", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 30 (2001), pp. 285-317.
3. Martin, Brian (2006) [Paths to social change: conventional politics, violence and nonviolence](#). In: Ralph Summy (ed.), *Nonviolent Alternatives for Social Change*, in *Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS)*, developed under the auspices of the UNESCO (Oxford: Eolss Publishers, <http://www.eolss.net>, 2006). (Accessible at <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/peace.html>)

Seminar 2:

4. Chabot, Sean and Stellan Vinthagen (2007) "Rethinking Nonviolent Action and Contentious Politics: Political Cultures of Nonviolent Opposition in the Indian Independence Movement and Brazil's Landless Workers Movement", *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, Elsevier Sciences/JAI Press, Oxford, Vol. 27, pp. 91-122.
5. Sørensen, Majken & Stellan Vinthagen (2012) 2012 "Nonviolent Resistance and Culture", *Peace & Change*, Vol. 37, No. 3, July. pp. 444-470.

Seminar 3:

6. David Hess and Brian Martin (2006) [Repression, backfire, and the theory of transformative events](#). *Mobilization*, Vol. 11, No. 1, June 2006, pp. 249-267. (Accessible at <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/peace.html>)
7. Majken Jul Sørensen (2016) Constructive Resistance: Conceptualising and Mapping the Terrain, *Journal of Resistance Studies*, Volume 2, Number 1. (Accessible at <http://resistance-journal.org/product/constructive-resistance-conceptualising-and-mapping-the-terrain/>)
8. Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin (2014) The dilemma action: analysis of an activist technique. *Peace & Change*, Vol. 39, No. 1, January 2014, pp. 73-100. (Accessible at <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/peace.html>)

Seminar 4 (A book)

1. Erickson Nepstad, Sharon (2015) *Nonviolent Struggle: Theories, Strategies, and Dynamics*, New York: Oxford University Press. "NOTE: TO ORDER"

CLASS SCHEDULE

More details on class meetings will be provided during the course.

This schedule may be modified. If so, changes will be announced in class and via email.

Civil Resistance and Social Change

Wednesday, September 4 Course introduction

Presentation of the course, assignments, literature, etc. Presentation of students and the professor. Speaker Series on Resistance (see umass.edu/resistancestudies), and Special events (Workshop, etc.) and visits. Sign up for assignments (News, External Events and Seminar rapporteurs). Order the Nepstad book NOW! See Amazon.com. Advice on how to read social science literature.

Assignment: After class, read the Syllabus carefully.

September 9: Civil Resistance and Social Change (And News Report)

Introduction of the thematic and its guiding problems and questions. Video on Nonviolent strategy, trainings and campaigns in the Civil Rights movement.

Readings: Schock, Kurt (2003) "Nonviolent Action and Its Misconceptions".

OPTIONAL EXTRA LECTURE Sept 10 RSI Resistance Studies Speaker Series: "Nonviolent Resistance Beyond the Single Story", Professor Sean Chabot, Eastern Washington University. NOTE: At Integrated Science Building ISB, room 145. See <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events>

PART 1: Key concepts/frameworks

September 11: Social movement theory, part 1 (the underlying factors) (And News Report)

Basic theoretical frameworks on social movements are presented and explained, and illustrated (frustrations, historical change, resource mobilization, collective identity, etc.). Video on 'mobilization'

Readings: Edelman, Marc (2001) "Social Movements", and Martin, Brian (2006) "Paths to social change".

September 16: Social movement theory, part 2 (the strategies and tactics) (And News Report)

Video and discussion on a social movement campaign against apartheid in South Africa. Through an effective organizing of a local boycott, the movement created a crisis within the regime, which although the boycott in itself only achieved local change, was used to mobilize more (demonstrations, conscious objections, international boycott, etc.), which some years later forced the regime to enter negotiations.

Readings: <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/south-african-blacks-boycott-apartheid-port-elizabeth-1985-86>

September 18: Unarmed revolutions (Time for collection of ideas for Course Paper)

Definition and examples of unarmed revolutions are presented, research results, and also theories explaining why they work, and sometimes fail. We will reflect upon why unarmed revolutions have a much higher success rate than armed ones, but still fail to achieve social justice and equality.

Readings: Erickson Nepstad, Sharon (2015) Chapter 5-6.

September 23: Nonviolent action and Civil resistance, part 1 (And News Report)

Basic concepts of civil resistance is explained and outlined (such as 'nonviolence', 'direct action', 'civil disobedience', 'protest', 'constructive resistance', etc.). The power theory of nonviolent resistance is explained through the 'pillars of support'.

Readings: Erickson Nepstad, Sharon (2015) Chapter 1-4.

September 25: Nonviolent action and Civil resistance, part 2

The analytical framework of Ackerman and Kreugler is presented, illustrated and discussed. This framework is the one you will apply in your course papers when analyzing your campaign of choice.

Readings:

September 30: 'Bringing down a dictator'

We see the movie about how the Serbian opposition succeeded with what the NATO-bombings failed to do: bringing down the dictator Milosovic. They used combinations of strikes by the miners, alliances between opposition parties, parallel votes counting, creative activism, and mass demonstrations. Here we also see the role of humor as a form of resistance by the youth activist group Otpor.

Readings: David Hess and Brian Martin (2006) "Repression, backfire, and the theory of transformative events". Erickson Nepstad, Sharon (2015) Chapter 7 and 9. See also: <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/serbians-overthrow-milosevic-bulldozer-revolution-2000>

PART 2: Text seminars on mandatory literature (see above)

Note: Seminar questions must be handed in at the start of each seminar, see above.

October 2: Articles Seminar 1 (Note: Time to hand in the review essay)

Text seminar rapporteurs present (20 min.), give us their handout and then we discuss the rest of the time in groups based on participants questions.

Readings: All the text specified above for that seminar.

Oct 5 EXTRA OPTIONAL: Activist gathering at the Agape community, see https://agapcommunity.org/?event=francis-day-2019&event_date=2019-10-05

October 7: Articles Seminar 2

Text seminar rapporteurs present (20 min.), give us their handout and then we discuss the rest of the time in groups based on participants questions.

Readings: All the text specified above for that seminar.

October 9: Articles Seminar 3

Text seminar rapporteurs present (20 min.), give us their handout and then we discuss the rest of the time in groups based on participants questions.

Readings: All the text specified above for that seminar.

Oct 10 EXTRA OPTIONAL: LECTURE RSI Resistance Studies Speaker Series: “Why is it so difficult to build intersectional resistance alliances?”, Resistance Studies Fellow Mandy Carter, RSI UMass Amherst. NOTE: At Integrated Science Building ISB, room 145. See <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events>

October 15: Nepstad Seminar 4 (Note a Tuesday, due to Indigenous Day or “Columbus Day” on Monday)

Text seminar rapporteurs present (20 min.), give us their handout and then we discuss the rest of the time in groups based on participants questions.

Readings: Nepstad’s book

PART 3: Case stories of civil resistance (movies, narratives and discussions)

October 16: Case story of civil resistance (Campaigns in Chile, and Poland)

We see videos that describe two successful nonviolent campaigns in two very different contexts. In Chile an alliance of different political groups mobilized against the right-wing military junta and the dictator Pinochet, forcing a referendum about the regime. In Poland the trade union Solidarnosc fought for the right to negotiate working conditions within a socialist state and military rule during the state of emergency, and – after a long struggle – not only forced the state to negotiate and recognize the trade union, but became key to the fall of the Berlin Wall in East Germany.

Readings: <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/solidarno-solidarity-brings-down-communist-government-poland-1988-89>, and <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/chileans-overthrow-pinochet-regime-1983-1988>

October 21: Logbona Olukonee, an afrocuban feminist queer and audiovisual activist, will talk on “**Resistance is a Bridge between activisms: Blackness and queerness in Cuba and Chiapas**”, at 4:00-6 pm, at Integrated Science Building (ISB) Room 145. Logbona will focus on how her own experience as an afrodiasporic and queer Cuban migrant in San Cristóbal, Mexico has allowed her to establish dialogues about resistance in these communities - resistance to coloniality imposed on the organization of social relations, and feminist spaces. She will use an afrofeminist standpoint as a theoretical and methodological tool to reflect on how blackness and queerness navigates in the border of

the South of Mexico. As a member of the afrofeminist queer AfroKute Collective, Logbona will use the experiences of the workshop Decolonizing Our Hips, that she is developing in Chiapas and the City of México, as an example of how we address the relationship between racism, blackness and resistance in the feminist spaces, see <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events/rsi>

October 23: Case story of civil resistance (the movement of landless workers in Brazil, MST) (And News Report)

MST is an amazing example of both a successful resistance movement that achieved remarkable results, and a movement that illustrates the combination of resistance and constructive programs. MST is also an example of a movement that is not focused on regime change or a revolution that puts the national state in focus, but one that focus on autonomy, self-governance and a network of local change that amounts to a revolution of its own kind.

Readings: Sörensen, Majken & Stellan Vinthagen (2012) 2012 “Nonviolent Resistance and Culture”. Also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landless_Workers%27_Movement and <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/landless-workers-win-land-rights-nova-ronda-alta-brazil-1982-1984>

October 28: Case story of civil resistance (Ship to Gaza and the Freedom Flotilla) (And News Report)

Here we will learn about the situation in the ‘biggest outdoor prison’ in the world, where a humanitarian crisis is ongoing since several years, due to the imposed blockade of all transport in and out of this area of Palestine. Palestinian diaspora activists in Europe, Israeli Jews, and solidarity activists from all over the world joined forces and created a ‘dilemma action’ for the Israeli government: the Freedom Flotilla to Gaza. An action that had strong international impact, decreased the blockade, but failed to lift it.

Readings: Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin (2014) “The dilemma action”. Also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaza_Freedom_Flotilla and <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/freedom-flotilla-gains-partial-victory-eases-blockade-gaza-strip-2010>

October 30: Case story of civil resistance (Praying the Devil back to Hell)

We see selected parts of the movie ‘Praying the Devil back to Hell’. This winner of Best Documentary award at Tribeca Film Festival and Official Section of Sundance Film Festival, chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country. Thousands of women ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim came together to pray for peace and then staged a silent protest outside of the Presidential Palace. It is a compelling testimony of how grassroots activism can alter the history of nations.

Readings: Most important reading is

<http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/liberian-women-act-end-civil-war-2003>

But read also: <https://tavaana.org/en/content/how-women-liberia-fought-peace-and-won>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Liberian_Civil_War, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_of_Liberia_Mass_Action_for_Peace

November 4: Constructive Programs (aka Building the New Society) (Time to hand in the 2-page summary of your planned course Paper) (And News Report)

We discuss how the failure of unarmed revolutions perhaps could be altered through the key idea that Gandhi suggested: the 'constructive program'. Examples are given and illustrations of the idea. The new society is shown through its 'pillar of support'.

Readings: Chabot, Sean and Stellan Vinthagen (2007) "Rethinking Nonviolent Action". Majken Jul Sørensen (2016) "Constructive Resistance".

November 6 LECTURE RSI Resistance Studies Speaker Series: "Inhabiting the In Between: Barbara Deming's Radical Feminist Nonviolence", Research associate Ynestra King, Five College Women's Studies Research Center. NOTE: At Integrated Science Building ISB, room 145. See <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events>

NOTE: No teaching November 11 (Veterans Day)!

November 13 Discussion Seminar: The whole class is devoted to questions, problems or issues that you want to raise concerning the topics, literature (or assignments) in the class.

Assignment: Write down questions you have for the professor.

NOTE: No teaching November 18 and 20 (Work on your course paper)

No teaching Nov 25-27, Fall Break

Part 4: Course Papers

NOTE: On November 22, latest at 4 PM you must hand in the draft version of the course Paper via mail to the professor and by uploading the paper to the course site at Moodle. Everyone will then get a mail with information distributing the papers for peer-review, and identifying the groups for the paper seminars next week.

December 2 and 9: Draft Paper Seminars

Draft Paper Seminars are done in groups, where authors and reviewers are divided into the same groups. Circa 15 minutes per paper. Details will be provided in a separate handout. Based on comments from the reviews you will have the chance to rework your paper.

December 4 LECTURE RSI Resistance Studies Speaker Series: "Possible models of how to build intersectional resistance alliances", Resistance Studies Fellow Mandy Carter, RSI UMass Amherst. NOTE: At Integrated Science Building ISB, room 145. See <https://www.umass.edu/resistancestudies/events>

December 11: Course evaluation (And News Report)

The theme of the course is evaluated in an end-of-semester teaching evaluation.

Dec 17: NOTE: This is the absolute deadline for the final version of your course Paper. Submit via email to the professor. Late submissions are not accepted.