

*We have it in our power to begin the world over again.*  
— Thomas Paine

*As long as I can conceive something better than myself  
I cannot be easy unless I am striving to bring it  
into existence or clearing the way for it.*  
— George Bernard Shaw

# Creating a Good Society

*Experimental College, Oberlin College*

<http://www.vernalproject.org/Courses/CourseA.html>

**Spring Semester 2004**

**ExCo-513**

**1 Credit**

**Meeting Times:** Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:00 PM — First Meeting: Wednesday, February 18, 2004

**Location:** Adam J. Lewis Center for Environmental Studies Building (AJLC), Room 102

**Instructor:** Randy Schutt, Coordinator of the Vernal Education Project

[see <http://www.vernalproject.org/AboutRandy.shtml> ]

[rschutt@vernalproject.org](mailto:rschutt@vernalproject.org) <http://www.vernalproject.org>

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ — anytime between 8:30 AM and 9:30 PM

**Maximum Number of Students:** 16

## **Description and Basic Information**

This course will explore the possibility of creating a good society: Is it possible? If so, how? What would a good society be like? How have people tried to bring about social change in the past? How might we go about it now? What would it take to really transform society?

## **Class Requirements**

- Regular Attendance – Hey, we only meet 12 times, so no more than two absences allowed. And please show up on time.

- Reading Assignments – Class discussions will be based on the readings, so it is very important that you read all assignments before class — the main readings should take no more than an hour. Each week there will be a few readings that everyone will read plus special reading sets that a single student will read and present to the rest of the class (see below).

- Presentations — During each class, one or more students will make a short (5 minute) presentation on each of the special readings for that week. Over the 12 weeks, everyone will get an opportunity to present one or more of the 17 special readings.

- Discussion – The class will consist mainly of a lively discussion of the readings, so join in!

- Journal (optional) – It's often easier to learn if you reflect and write down your thoughts. Journal entries are for your benefit only (they won't be handed in so you don't really have to do them), but hopefully, they will make it easier to pull together your mid-term paper and final presentation.

- **Mid-Term Paper** — A 2–3 page paper on the topic: “The most unyielding obstacle to creating a good society and the necessary elements to overcome that obstacle.” OR “What I have learned so far about creating a good society.” **Mid-Term Papers are due by the beginning of class in Week 6.** Once papers have been submitted, I will circulate them to all the other students to add to our discussion.

- **Final Presentation Plus Notes** – A 10-minute presentation on the topic: “The steps someone like me could take in the next five years that would lead to major social change (non-reformist reform) in one important area of society.” OR “If it was my responsibility to create a good society, I would...”. If you choose the latter question, don’t assume that you are anyone but yourself and that you have any more power than you do — the question is how **you** would realistically create a good society (or begin the process) given that you are who you are (you’ll probably need to work with others — how will you find others to work with and how will you work together?). Your presentation should reflect your ideas as well as make reference to relevant readings and class discussion.

[If you strongly want to choose another topic instead, talk with me.]

Prior to their presentation, students must hand in 1-2 pages of notes they intend to use to make their presentation. **Presentation Notes are due by the beginning of class in Week 10.** Once notes have been submitted, I will circulate them to all the other students to aid in our discussion of the presentations.

## Course Materials

There is one book and some papers for this class, but you do not need to purchase them. All the readings are available on the web through links at <http://www.vernalproject.org/Courses/CourseA.html>. A copy of Inciting Democracy will be in the reserve room in Mudd Library. There are no course fees.

**Main Text:** Inciting Democracy: A Practical Proposal for Creating a Good Society by Randy Schutt, SpringForward Press, 2001 <http://www.vernalproject.org/IcD.shtml>

downloadable from: <http://www.vernalproject.org/IcDDownload.shtml>

also available for purchase from the instructor for \$20 (at the first class)

## Course Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

Is it possible to create a good society? If so, how?

Most discussions of social change focus on the very near future: how to get a specific law passed or how to influence an officeholder (or other authority) to act differently or how to get a different person elected to office. If the focus is longer term, the discussion typically becomes very philosophical and abstract: Are human beings inherently good or evil? Are humans perfectible? What is the ideal society? Is democracy possible?

In this course, we will explore these topics briefly, but the focus will be on considering the practical issue of how to create a good society in the mid- to long-term (25 –100 years). How have people tried to bring about social change in the past? How might we go about it now? How could we actually create a truly good society, beginning now, in the present situation? What is the best strategy? What resources would we need? What should we do to insure that we end up with a good society? What would a good society be like?

At the end of the course, students should have a clear idea of what is usually meant by the term “a good society”, a clear idea of the obstacles that stand in the way of creating a good society, and the methods that have been typically used to overcome these obstacles. Students should also understand the strategy proposed in the book Inciting Democracy for creating a good society, have their own ideas about whether this proposal is a good one, and their own ideas about a better strategy.

This course should help students develop their critical thinking and provide a chance to consider their life values. It should help add some context to their study of sociology, political science, anthropology, philosophy, environmental studies, women’s studies, and so on.

## Class Dynamics

This class will be primarily a series of discussions based on the readings and stirred by the discussion questions. We will also do some short exercises of various kinds to stimulate our thinking. I will do my best not to lecture, but instead to ask questions and pose dilemmas that will encourage us to explore ideas.

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## Content Outline

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### Week 1: Introduction, overview, class logistics, and personal introductions

#### Readings:

(Read in class): “Breaking the Cycle of Vengeance” by Paul Rogat Loeb, Common Dreams, October 1, 2001

<http://www.commondreams.org/views01/1001-07.htm>

(Read in class): “The Bulletin Clock: Current Time” by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, February 27, 2002

<http://www.thebulletin.org/media/current.html>

(Read in class): “Hope is Not a Foolish Notion” by Randy Schutt

<http://www.vernalproject.org/Papers2/HopeNotFoolish.html>

(Optional) Inciting Democracy, Ch. 1 “Background” (pp. 1-12)

#### Agenda:

[proposed time in minutes]

15 Introduction to and overview of the class

30 Personal introductions

- Your name, hometown, year in school, major
- Your life goals
- History of your thinking about social change (if time)

15 Class logistics

- Class location, meeting dates and times, etc.
- Class requirements
- Readings, special readings, and discussion questions
- Registration, etc.
- Choose a student to read and present the Special Reading for next week

10 Force Field Analysis **Exercise**

- In pairs: one person listens while the other person talks
- Topic: those people or events that stimulated, encouraged, or supported you to think about social change and those people or events that discouraged or dampened your interest in social change
- Repeat with talker now listening and listener now talking

10 Read “Breaking the Cycle of Vengeance”, “The Bulletin Clock: Current Time”, and “Hope is Not a Foolish Notion” — One-third of class reads each paper.

30 **Discussion** of these three readings

10 Evaluation

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you believe humanity is moving toward having a good society or away from that ideal?
2. Is it possible to create a good society? Why or why not?

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### Week 2: Elements of a Good Society

#### Readings:

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 2 “Elements of a Good Society” (pp. 13-32)

**Total pages:** 20

#### Special Reading 1 — Human Rights

“Universal Declaration of Human Rights” adopted in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

Brief summaries of other treaties:

“International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, New York, 1966”

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/civil.asp>

“International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, New York, 1966”

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/economic.asp>

“International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, New York, 1966”

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/racial.asp>

“Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, New York, 1979”

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/elimination.asp>

“Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York, 1989”

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/child.asp>

**Total pages:** about 10

### Agenda:

- 10 Introductions: names
- 10 Check-in
- 15 Logistics
  - Choose students to read and present Special Readings for the rest of the course
- 15 Values Clarification **Exercise:** What should be changed?
  - Group brainstorm: Things that should definitely be changed to create a good society
  - Decide: The 10 most important things that should be changed
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 1
- 5 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 1
- 50 **Discussion** of the readings
- 10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions: (we will not discuss all, just the ones you find most interesting)

1. Does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the various other covenants and conventions adopted by the United Nations provide a sufficient basis and an outline for a good society?
2. Does the Golden Rule provide a sufficient basis for a good society?
3. Do the elements outlined in Inciting Democracy provide a sufficient basis for a good society?
4. What utopian novels have inspired you? What elements of utopian societies seem particularly attractive?
5. How would a good society provide the essentials and luxuries of life? What kinds of institutions would exist in a good society?
  - How would a good society provide housing and clothing?
  - How would a good society provide transportation of goods and people (commuting to work and traveling for leisure)? How would roads, rails, and airports be built and maintained?
  - How would a good society build and maintain infrastructure (water, sewage, communication, and energy)?
  - How would a good society provide childcare, elder care, and healthcare (routine and critical)?
  - How would a good society provide education (basic reading, writing, and arithmetic for children; general education about philosophy, art, and the basics of society; specialized training for particular work professions)? Who would get specialized training?
  - How would a good society produce goods (useful necessities, niceties, and luxuries)? How much should be produced?
  - How would a good society provide other services like food preparation, haircutting, mail delivery, fire-fighting, emotional therapy, and massage?
  - How would a good society provide creative art (music, dance, drama, comedy, visual art, television, radio, and video)? Who would be artists? How would they be supported?
  - In a good society, how would parks and museums be built and maintained?
  - Who in a good society would do basic research (theoretical and laboratory)? How would they be supported?
  - In a good society, what would happen to sewage, garbage, and toxic wastes?
  - In a good society, how would trade be conducted? Would a good society have money?
  - In a good society, would interest be charged for loans? Would there be insurance?
  - In a good society, what things should be public and which should be private? What should be controlled for the common good and what should be left to individuals?

- In a good society, who would own clothing, housing, industry, and transportation equipment (cars, trucks, railroads, and aircraft)? What power and responsibilities would go along with ownership?
  - Who would control a good society? How would decisions be made? How would decisions be enforced?
6. In a good society, how would people be motivated to behave usefully and responsibly and discouraged from behaving destructively?
  7. How would a good society treat those with less capability (children, elders, those who are physically disabled, mentally retarded, psychotic, or addicted to strong drugs)? In a good society, how much would they be helped or controlled and who would help or control them?
  8. How would a good society deal with conflicting needs or desires (such as the needs and desires of one person versus another, one religious belief versus another, leisure versus production, ownership versus access, noise versus quiet, resource extraction and utilization versus the environment, humans versus animals)?
  9. In a good society, what would be the role of religion?
  10. How would a good society deal with rapists and murderers?
  11. How would a good society deal with someone who was able, but unwilling to work?
  12. How would a good society deal with cults?
  13. What role should clothing fashion and other fads play in a good society?
  14. Would a good society allow or provide abortion?
  15. Can our current society be transformed into a good society, or must our current society be completely overturned and recreated from scratch?

### Week 3: Aspects of a Good Society / Introduction to Obstacles to Change

#### Readings:

“Building a Just and Caring World: Four Cornerstones” by Riane Eisler

<http://www.partnershipway.org/html/subpages/articles/cornerstone.htm>

“Buying Dreams: Visions for a Better Future” by Michael Albert

<http://www.zmag.org/ParEcon/writings/albertold15.htm>

(skim) Inciting Democracy, Appendix A, “Some Positive Near-Term Policy Changes” (pp. 239-246)

**Total pages:** about 18

#### Other Resources (optional)

“Riane Eisler, Creating Partnership Futures: My Life, Work and Vision of the Future”

<http://www.partnershipway.org/html/subpages/articles/creatingfuture.htm>

“Paradigm Shift: The Decline and Fall of the Dominator Culture: An Interview with Riane Eisler” by Stephen Marshall, published on the Guerrilla News Network, August 2002

<http://www.partnershipway.org/html/subpages/articles/paradymshift.htm>

#### Agenda:

10 Introductions: names

10 Check-in

10 Values Clarification **Exercise:** What is important?

- Group brainstorm: Things you would give up under no circumstances, Things you would give up for a good society

60 **Discussion** of the readings and of elements of a good society

----- Switch focus to: Obstacles to Creating a Good Society (to be continued next week) -----

20 Obstacles **Exercise**

- As a group, choose something we would like to change (perhaps from the list generated last time) — write it in a box at the left of the board
- To the right of this box, brainstorm 2–5 obstacles that prevent that thing from changing. Put each of them in a box and connect them with a line to the original item
- To the right of each of these boxes, brainstorm 2-5 obstacles that prevent that obstacle from changing. Put each of them in a box and connect them with a line to the obstacle.

10 Evaluation

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Riane Eisler emphasizes moving from a dominator to a partnership model. She focuses on early childhood development, gender relations, economic relations (especially regarding women), and spiritual relations as critical to a good society. Are these more important than the traditional political realm?
2. Is Eisler's partnership model the same as abiding by the Golden Rule?
3. Michael Albert argues against Soviet-style communism as well as against social democratic government. Is participatory democracy a good alternative?
4. Albert argues in favor of "inter-communalism" as a way to value and preserve a variety of cultures. Would this truly allow multiculturalism? Should destructive cultures be valued and preserved? What would constitute a destructive culture?
5. Albert argues against both rewarding talent and rewarding owners of productive equipment (capitalists): "Why is talent, which is the outcome of a genetic lottery, any more deserving of reward than the contributions of privately-owned means of production which is the outcome of an inheritance lottery?" Do you agree with this perspective? Should only effort be rewarded? How much should effort, talent, or capital be rewarded?

**Week 4: Obstacles to Positive Change****Readings:**

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 3 "Obstacles to Progressive Change" (pp. 33-58)

**Total pages:** 26

**Special Reading 2** — The Power Structure

"The Shaping of the American Polity" excerpted from the book Who Rules America Now? by G. William Domhoff, Touchstone Books, 1983

[http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Ruling\\_Elites/AmericanPolity\\_WRAN.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Ruling_Elites/AmericanPolity_WRAN.html)

**Total pages:** about 15

**Special Reading 3** — The Military-Industrial Complex

"Money Talks: The Implications of U.S. Budget Priorities" by Robert L. Borosage, September 1999 (skim)

[http://www.fpiif.org/papers/money/index\\_body.html](http://www.fpiif.org/papers/money/index_body.html)

"Ruling Elites Move to the Right" from the book Rollback: Right-wing Power in U.S. Foreign Policy by Thomas Bodenheimer and Robert Gould, South End Press, 1989

[http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Foreign\\_Policy/RulingElites\\_MoveRight.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Foreign_Policy/RulingElites_MoveRight.html)

**Total pages:** about 30

**Special Reading 4** — Economic/Media Power Structure

"The Tax-Cut Con" by Paul Krugman, NY Times Magazine, September 14, 2003

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/14/magazine/14TAXES.html?ei=1&en=1b27864b8f18d083&ex=1065197294&pagewanted=all&position=> or

<http://www.pkarchive.org/economy/TaxCutCon.html> or

<http://thomasmc.com/0913a.htm>

"Using MLK to Keep You in Your Place" by Cynthia Peters, ZNet Daily Commentaries, March 15, 2002

<http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2002-03/15peters.cfm>

**Total pages:** about 20

**Special Reading 5** — Inner Healing

"Tikkun Community: Core Vision and Founding Principles" Tikkun, 11.19.2001 — 26 web pages

<http://www.tikkun.org/community/index.cfm/action/community/article/1.html>

"Closed Hearts, Closed Minds" by Michael Lerner, Tikkun, September/October 2003

<http://www.tikkun.org/magazine/index.cfm/action/tikkun/issue/tik0309/article/030903a.html>

**Total pages:** about 20

**Agenda:**

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 2
- 2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 2
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 3
- 2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 3
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 4
- 2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 4
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 5
- 2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 5
- 15 Other Obstacles **Exercise**
  - Group brainstorm: Besides the five primary obstacles described in Inciting Democracy, what others stand in the way?
  - Decide: Do the five major items encompass these items or should they be added to the list?
- 50 **Discussion** of the readings
- 7 Evaluation

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What stands in the way of us transforming our current society into a good society? Inciting Democracy lists five primary obstacles to positive change. Are these five really obstacles to change? Are they the most important five? Are there others?
2. Is there a ruling elite? If so, is it monolithic or are there many separate or overlapping factions? If there is an elite, how does it coordinate its effort?
3. How do people benefit from the current society? How do each of us benefit? Do we have some control over the current society? Are we part of the power structure?
4. How is information and culture passed along from one generation to the next? How can destructive aspects of culture be changed?
5. Who would suffer from social change and how? How might we each suffer?
6. What money or effort must be expended to bring about change? Who can or should provide these resources?
7. How much can people change? How much have you changed? How much more will you change in the rest of your life?
8. How effective are social change organizations in bringing about positive change?
9. Is in-fighting a problem in social change organizations? Is lack of knowledge or skill a problem?

**Week 5: Elements of an Effective Strategy for Transformation**

**\*\*\*\* Mid-Term Paper is Due Next Week \*\*\*\***

**Readings:**

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 4 “Elements of an Effective Strategy for Democratic Transformation” (pp. 59-74)

**Total pages:** 16

**Special Reading 6 — Strategy**

“What is Strategy?” by Z Magazine <http://www.creativeresistance.ca/toolkit/toolkit-what-is-strategy.htm> or <http://www.zmag.org/instructionals/rtinstruc/id61.htm> (read all 14 articles listed on the left)

**Total pages:** about 20

**Special Reading 7** — Steady Plodding

“The Nonviolent Army Revisited” by Ted Glick, Future Hope column, September 10, 2003

<http://lists.gp-us.org/pipermail/iowa-dx/2003-September/000158.html>

“A Post Mortem On The Peace Movement?” by Cynthia Peters, ZNet Activism Watch, December 27, 2001

[http://www.zmag.org/content/Activism/peters\\_peace\\_movement.cfm](http://www.zmag.org/content/Activism/peters_peace_movement.cfm)

“Robin Hood Was Right” by Cynthia Peters, ZNet Daily Commentaries, May 28 2000

<http://www.zmag.org/ZSustainers/ZDaily/2000-05/28peters.htm>

“Five Guidelines for Our Organizing” by Cynthia Peters, ZNet Activism Watch, March 31, 2003

<http://www.zmag.org/content/Activism/petersfive.cfm>

**Total pages:** about 20

**Special Reading 8** — Thoughts of Michael Albert

“Looking Back, Moving Forward: Sonia Shah of South End Press Interviews Michael Albert”

<http://www.zmag.org/llessons.htm>

“Discussion on Radical Strategy, Sabotage, and the Weathermen” by Michael Albert

<http://www.spunk.org/library/misc/sp000209.txt>

**Total pages:** about 25

**Other Resources** (optional)

“Another World is Happening,” by Dan Merkle, March 3, 2003

<http://www.ippn.org/article.php?ID=sprnews03i.html>

“Anarcho-syndicalism” by Tom Wetzel, October 21, 2002

[http://www.infoshop.org/texts/as\\_wetzel.html](http://www.infoshop.org/texts/as_wetzel.html)

**Agenda:**

5 Welcome

10 Check-in

25 **Change Exercise**

- Group brainstorm: For each of the 10 change strategies listed on pp. 59-62 of Inciting Democracy, brainstorm examples when this strategy was effective in bringing about significant change. Then brainstorm some other strategies and brainstorm examples of their use.

5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 6

2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 6

5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 7

2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 7

5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 8

2 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 8

50 **Discussion**

9 Evaluation

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Inciting Democracy lists ten traditional strategies for bringing about positive change. What are the strengths and limitations of each one? Which of these ten should we consider using now? Which should we not use? Are there others that would be better?
2. Inciting Democracy lists seven crucial characteristics of fundamental change efforts. Are these important? Are there others equally important?
3. Inciting Democracy calls for a strategy based on mass education and powerful, nonviolent social change movements. Is this a good strategy? What strategy might be better?
4. Inciting Democracy lists six essential components of an effective strategy. Are these important? Are there others equally important?



## Week 6: A Strategic Program for Societal Change

**\*\*\*\* Mid-Term Paper is Due — the Monday before class at 9:00 AM !! (send to [rschutt@vernalproject.org](mailto:rschutt@vernalproject.org)) \*\*\*\***

### Readings:

Inciting Democracy, part of Ch. 5 “A Strategic Program to Create a Good Society” (only pp. 75-87)

**Total pages:** 20

### Special Reading 9 — Thich Nhat Hanh’s Mindfulness

“About Thich Nhat Hanh”

<http://www.iamhome.org/tnh.htm>

“Thay’s 14 Precepts” by Thich Nhat Hanh

<http://www.seaox.com/thich.html> (bottom of page) or

<http://www.prajnaparamita.com/newpage16.htm> (bottom of page)

“The Five Mindfulness Trainings” by Thich Nhat Hanh

<http://www.spiritwalk.org/thichnhathanh.htm#writings>

“Man is Not Our Enemy” by Thich Nhat Hanh (only 1st three paragraphs and last two paragraphs)

[http://www.plumvillage.org/Vietnam/man\\_is\\_not\\_our\\_enemy.htm](http://www.plumvillage.org/Vietnam/man_is_not_our_enemy.htm)

“New Century Message from Thich Nhat Hanh” by Thich Nhat Hanh, December 7, 1999

[http://www.plumvillage.org/general/new\\_century\\_message\\_from\\_TNH.htm](http://www.plumvillage.org/general/new_century_message_from_TNH.htm)

**Total pages:** about 10

### Agenda:

10 Welcome

10 Check-in

5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 9

5 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 9

60 **Discussion**

20 Leadership **Exercise**

- Figure 5.1 lists 28 leadership roles necessary for social change. On a piece of paper, list the roles that you often take and seem to be skilled in. Which would you like to be good at?
- Now in pairs, explain to your partner, then switch and have her/him explain to you.

10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

1. Inciting Democracy describes a 4-stage program for change with each stage taking approximately 20 years. Does this program seem reasonable? What would be a better scenario?
2. How important is it for activists to transform themselves so their behavior is consonant with a good society?
3. How important is it for activists to develop their knowledge and skills?
4. How important is it for activists to form a supportive community?
5. How important is it for activists to work through the conventional power structure? How important is it to work outside the system (demonstrations, etc.)? How important is it to develop alternative institutions? How important is it to rely on or control news and other communication media versus face-to-face discussions?
6. How important is leadership in social change efforts? What is the best model of leadership: a single, strong leader; a leadership group; or widely dispersed leadership?
7. What is the best kind of societal transformation: short and fast (less than a year) or long and measured (involving many years of gradual change)?

8. What is the best kind of societal transformation: a revolution led by a small number of people, a revolution led by a large group, a massive change involving wide segments of the population, a transformation led by a majoritarian movement, or a transformation involving a unanimous movement of everyone in society?

## Week 7: Nonviolent Action, Violent Action, and Endurance

### Readings:

Inciting Democracy, part of Ch. 5 “A Strategic Program to Create a Good Society” (only pp. 87-94)

“Why Nonviolence? Introduction to Nonviolence Theory and Strategy” by Bob Irwin and Gordon Faison, 1978, revised 1983.

<http://www.vernalproject.org/OPapers/WhyNV/WhyNonviolence1.html>

“Fighting To Win: An Interview with Craig Rosebraugh by Darby Dargymm”

<http://thunderbay.indymedia.org/news/2003/04/6185.php>

**Total pages:** about 24

### Special Reading 10 — Pacifist Perspectives

“September 11: A Pacifist Response” by Stanley Hauerwas, Hospitality, October 2002.

<http://www.opendoorcommunity.org/HospOct02.pdf> (front page article)

“Christian Pacifism”

<http://www.gutlesspacifist.com/archives/00000291.htm>

“A Pacifist Dictionary” by Kate Maloy

[http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/pacifist\\_dictionary.php](http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/pacifist_dictionary.php)

“The Failure of War” by Wendell Berry, YES! Magazine, Winter 2001/2002

<http://www.commondreams.org/views01/1207-01.htm>

**Total pages:** about 18

### Special Reading 11 — A Variety of Perspectives on NV Action

“The Parameters of Nonviolent Action: What Makes An Action Nonviolent?” Nonviolent Activist, War Resisters League

<http://www.warresisters.org/nva0701-2.htm>

**Total pages:** about 15

### Special Reading 12 — Strategic Nonviolent Action

“How to Topple Saddam with Weapons of Will by Pete Ackerman”

<http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj0209&article=020910>

“Mass Action Since Seattle”, by George Lakey, October 2000

<http://www.trainingforchange.org/strategy/mass-action.html>

**Total pages:** about 25

### Special Reading 13 — A Dialog

“Arresting Disobedience” by Jessica Azulay, ZNet Daily Commentaries, January 22, 2003

<http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2003-01/22azulay.cfm>

“True Resistance/What Nonviolence Is” by Gordon Clark, ZNet Daily Commentaries, February 06, 2003

[http://www.zmag.org/Sustainers/content/2003-02/06clark\\_.cfm](http://www.zmag.org/Sustainers/content/2003-02/06clark_.cfm)

“Revisiting Civil (Un)arrest and (Dis)obedience” by Jessica Azulay, ZNet Daily Commentaries, March 02, 2003

<http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2003-03/02azulay.cfm>

**Total pages:** about 18

**Special Reading 14** — On Diversity of Tactics

“Anarchy in the USA: Militant Non-violence and the Politics of Protest” — part 2 of an interview of David Graeber by Charles Maol

<http://www.guerrillanews.com/globalization/doc332.html>

“What is ‘Diversity of Tactics’?” by an anonymous activist

<http://www.greenfyre.org/gfyre/whatisdot.html>

“Getting Our Tactics Right: Lessons from the Calgary G8 Mobilization” by Starhawk, July 2002

<http://www.starhawk.org/activism/activism-writings/tacticsright.html>

**Total pages:** about 17

**Special Reading 15** — More on Diversity of Tactics

“Turning Point” by L.A. Kauffman, May 2001

<http://www.free-radical.org/issue16.shtml>

“A Diversity of Tactics?” by Abby Scher, In These Times, May 28, 2001

<http://www.inthesetimes.com/issue/25/13/scher2513.html>

“Diversity of Tactics & Democracy” by George Lakey, Clamor Magazine, March-April 2002

<http://www.trainingforchange.org/reports/2002/diversity-of-tactics.html>

**Total pages:** about 15

**Other Resources** (optional)

“A Practical Christian Pacifism” by David A. Hoekema

[http://www.religion-online.org/cgi-bin/researchd.dll/showarticle?item\\_id=115](http://www.religion-online.org/cgi-bin/researchd.dll/showarticle?item_id=115)

“Can Love Save the World?” by Walter Wink, Winter 2001-2002

<http://www.futurenet.org/20spirituality/wink.htm>

“Philosophy of Nonviolence” by David McReynolds

<http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philosophy-nonviolence.php>

“Nonviolent Action as the Sword That Heals: Challenging Ward Churchill's ‘Pacifism As Pathology’” by George Lakey, March 2001

<http://www.trainingforchange.org/strategy/sword-that-heals.html>

“A Violent Proposition: Against The Weighted Chain Of Morality” by an anonymous activist

[http://www.geocities.com/kk\\_abacus/vbviolent.html](http://www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/vbviolent.html)

“Non-Violence and it's Violent Consequences” by Bill Meyers

<http://www.iiipublishing.com/nonv.htm> or <http://www.iiipublishing.com/nonviolence.pdf>

“On Winning Hearts and Minds”, by Ted Glick, Future Hope column, April 23, 2001

<http://www.ippn.org/article.php?ID=article01.html>

“If You Want to Win” by Michael Warren

<http://www.agoodlife.ca/edge/michael01.html>

**Agenda:**

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 10
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 10
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 11
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 11
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 12
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 12
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 13
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 13
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 14
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 14

- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 15
- 2 Questions about Special Reading 15
- 25 Spectrogram **Exercise**
  - For each of 10 change tactics, position yourself in the room along a spectrum according to whether you think the tactic is violent or nonviolent and on the other axis whether it is effective or ineffective. Why did you position yourself where you did?
- 30 **Discussion**
- 8 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

1. Is nonviolence the same as pacifism? How do pacifists respond to oppression? Is pacifism the same as passivism? How can pacifism change society?
2. How do nonviolent actions change society?
3. How important is it for a social change movement to be nonviolent? Which is more effective in bringing about societal transformation: violent action or nonviolent action?
4. What is Diversity of Tactics? What are the advantages and disadvantage of having diversity of tactics at demonstrations? Who is excluded by a strictly nonviolent action? Who is excluded by a diversity of tactics demonstration?

## Week 8: The Vernal Education Project

### Readings:

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 6 “The Vernal Education Program” (pp. 95-128) (skim over details)

**Total pages:** 32

**Special Reading 16** — Partnership Education

“Partnership Education in the 21st Century” by Riane Eisler, Encounter 15(3): 5-12

<http://www.partnershipway.org/html/subpages/articles/Partedencounter.htm>

**Total pages:** about 13

### Agenda:

- 10 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 15 Logistics of the class: discussion of final presentation; sign up for presentation slots
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 16
- 5 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 16
- 65 **Discussion**
- 10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

1. Inciting Democracy describes a social change movement based on an education project (the Vernal Education Project) that would take a long time to implement. Does it make sense to spend so much time on education?
2. The Vernal Education Program relies heavily on self-education and mutual education in small groups. This makes it relatively inexpensive and puts most of the responsibility for learning on the students. What is good and bad about this strategy?
3. The Vernal Education Program includes social service work, exercise, and emotional support work. Are these important?
4. What do activists need to know to be skilled and knowledgeable? Do the Vernal Program study group topics and workshop class topics cover the important areas?
5. As described, does the Vernal Education Program adequately embody the philosophy of progressive education? How could it be changed to do so better?

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## Week 9: Societal Transformation

**\*\*\*\* Notes for Final Presentation are Due Next Week \*\*\*\***

### Readings:

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 7 “Building a Powerful, Democratic Social Change Movement” (pp. 129-154)

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 9 “Transforming Society” (pp. 163-180)

**Total pages:** 44

### Special Reading 17 — Melissa’s Story

Inciting Democracy, Ch. 8 “Melissa’s Story” (pp. 155-162)

**Total pages:** 8

### Agenda:

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 5 Presentation (by a student) on Special Reading 17
- 5 Clarifying questions about Special Reading 17
- 85 **Discussion**
- 10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

#### Ch. 7

1. Do you believe that graduates of the Vernal Education Program would have the characteristics described in Chapter 7 of Inciting Democracy?
2. Inciting Democracy describes a variety of methods for changing society, typical tactics used, stages in typical movements, levels of activist success, and principles for organizing. Do these seem plausible, accurate, and complete?

#### Ch. 9

1. Inciting Democracy describes a scenario in which tens of thousands of activists work for many years to bring about transformation of society. How important is it to have a vision of a viable scenario?
2. Does this particular scenario seem plausible? What is a more likely scenario?
3. This scenario assumes that society will eventually reach a “tipping point” at which point transformation would finally get much easier. Does this seem plausible?

#### Ch. 8

1. Does Melissa’s story seem plausible? What parts seem far-fetched?

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## Week 10: Acting for Change and Leadership

**\*\*\*\* Notes for Final Presentation are Due — the Monday before class at 9:00 AM !! (send to [rschutt@vernalproject.org](mailto:rschutt@vernalproject.org)) \*\*\*\***

### Readings:

“A Brief History of Leadership” in Kick It In: Developing the Self-Motivation to Take the Lead pre-book advertising (pp. 2–9 only)

<http://www.kickitin.com/prebook.pdf>

“The Social Change Model of Leadership Development”

<http://www.reslife.cmich.edu/leadership/change.asp>

“Seven C's: A Social Change Model of Leadership”

<http://www.uky.edu/StudentCenter/StudentOrganizations/ELI/7Cs.html>

“The Seven C's of Leadership”

<http://www.msmc.la.edu/academics/leadership/7cs.htm> (click on the 7 C's)

Inciting Democracy, Figure 5.1: Leadership Roles in Each Stage of Transformation (p. 81)

“Case 1: Service to the Institution: Transforming the Process of Evaluation of Instruction”, pp. 31–36 in A Social Change Model of Leadership Development: Guidebook (Version II), Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles

<http://www.cmer.org/clearinghouse/leader/model.pdf>

**Total pages:** about 30

#### Other Resources (optional)

Excerpt from Exploring Leadership: For College Students Who Want to Make a Difference by Susan R. Komives, et al., March 1998, pp. 25-44

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0787909297/ref=lib\\_rd\\_ss\\_TT01/103-8121076-5268618?v=glance&s=books&vi=reader&img=10#reader-link](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0787909297/ref=lib_rd_ss_TT01/103-8121076-5268618?v=glance&s=books&vi=reader&img=10#reader-link)

#### Agenda:

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 10 Class logistics: Make sure everyone is ready to present their final project over the next two weeks; prepare schedule for presentations
- 50 **Discussion** of the Main Readings
- 20 Values Clarification **Exercise:** What Gets in the way?
  - At the top of a sheet of paper, write some action you would like to take in order to bring about positive social change, but are having difficulty taking. Then below it draw a line down the middle of the paper. On the left, list 5 things — both within and outside yourself, both real and unreal (but perceived) — that seem to prevent you from taking this action. Then to the right, for each of these items, list one or more steps you could take that could reduce or remove these barriers. If you have extra time, think about how you could actually implement these steps.
  - Now, in pairs, explain this to your partner, then switch and have her/him explain to you.
- 15 Action Clarification **Exercise:** What are your next steps?
  - On a sheet of paper, make three columns: “Goal”, “Date”, “First Step”. Then list up to five things that you would like to accomplish and a realistic date for accomplishing that goal. Then in the last column, write the first step in getting started.
  - Now, in pairs, explain this to your partner, then switch and have her/him explain to you.
- 10 Evaluation

#### Discussion Questions:

1. What is the “top down theory of leadership”, the “Great Man theory of leadership”, the “Great Event theory of leadership”, the “Trait Theory of leadership”, and the “Style Theory of leadership”? Are leaders born or made or both?
2. What is the “Social Change Model of Leadership Development? What characterizes this theory?
3. How does this model differ from these earlier theories? Is this model consonant with positive social change?
4. Another theory of leadership (the Relational Leadership Model) says that leadership must be inclusive, empowering, purposeful, ethical, and process-oriented. How do these characteristics compare to the 7 C's in the Social Change Model of Leadership Development?
5. What is your own definition of leadership?
6. Is personal responsibility an important aspect of leadership? Why or why not?
7. A phrase that is common in working with groups is “trust the process.” What does this mean? Does it make sense to trust the process?
8. Evaluate the process in the case study, “Transforming the Process of Evaluation of Instruction”. How well did the students exercise leadership?

9. Figure 5.1 in Inciting Democracy lists 28 kinds of leadership. Are all of these leadership roles important? Which of these leadership roles have you taken in the past? Which are you now good at? Which would you like to be good at?
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## Week 11: Student Presentations

### Readings:

Students' notes for their final presentations.

### Agenda:

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 10 Presentation 1
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 1
- 10 Presentation 2
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 2
- 10 Presentation 3
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 3
- 10 Presentation 4
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 4
- 15 Overall **Discussion**
- 10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

1. Evaluate this presentation: what is good, what is bad, what is likely to be effective or ineffective?
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## Week 12: Student Presentations

### Readings:

Students' notes for their final presentations.

### Agenda:

- 5 Welcome
- 10 Check-in
- 10 Presentation 5
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 5
- 10 Presentation 6
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 6
- 10 Presentation 7
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 7
- 10 Presentation 8
- 10 Discussion of Presentation 8
- 15 Overall **Discussion** and Wrap-Up
- 10 Evaluation

### Discussion Questions:

1. Evaluate this presentation: what is good, what is bad, what is likely to be effective or ineffective?