

## SYLLABUS -- SYSTEMS OF WAR AND PEACE

We will examine the major causes and consequences of economic, political, and military conflict between societies. We will also be concerned with the conditions necessary for the establishment of peaceful social systems. Of particular concern will be: sociological dimensions of the international system; the rise of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. to nuclear superpower status after World War II; the role of war and military institutions in shaping the nature and development of society; the cultural and gender dimensions of war and peace; the Cold War; the nuclear arms race; the role of peace movements; relations between the industrialized North and the South or Third World, including conflict in the Middle East and the war in Iraq; the resurgence of nationalist, ethnic and religious conflicts; environmental dimensions of war and peace; new thinking about peace, security and development in the post-Cold War era.

**Readings** The following readings are required (available at Black Sun Books, Hilyard and 24<sup>th</sup> 484-3777):

Seymour M. Hersh, Chain of Command: The Road From 9/11 to Abu Ghraib (Harper Perennial 2004)

Jonathan Schell, The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People (Metropolitan Books 2003)

Chalmers Johnson, The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic (Owl Books 2004)

Xerox and online articles and excerpts from books. An asterisk (\*) indicates a reading will be distributed in class as hardcopy, or available online. A (\*\*) indicates a recommended reading is in a xerox packet on reserve in Knight Library.

Recommended: Jonathan Barker, The No-Nonsense Guide to Terrorism (Verso 2003) on reserve

### **Format and Requirements**

This course emphasizes student participation and intense engagement with the course readings. In class meetings, I will present material or lecture for about 50 minutes, leaving about a half hour for discussion and presentation of students' ideas (sometimes we will break into small group discussions). After a 15 minute break, the second half of class meetings are reserved for viewing and discussing films, or guest presentations. Class attendance is required, and everyone should come to class having completed the reading for the week and prepared with questions or commentary. The lecture topics and the readings are carefully integrated, thus I cannot emphasize too strongly the value of doing the assigned readings in advance of each class meeting. Students will receive extra credit for participation in class discussion.

Reading and lecture response papers. In several decades of teaching I have found that the best way to learn a subject is to come to grips with what provocative authors/ instructors have to say about the "big questions"—of history, politics, war and peace, and societies. Thus, in weeks 2-9 you are required to write and turn in **at each class** a 1½ to 2 page (typed, single-spaced, in 11 or 12 point font) commentary on the readings (and lecturer material) for that week, followed by a question that you think would be good to stimulate discussion of these readings. Your commentary should include the following elements: 1) what is the main thesis, and major arguments, of the author. 2) what are some of the key examples or evidence the author uses to make his or her arguments. 3) what are some of your critical remarks regarding the strengths or weaknesses of the author's arguments; you may refer to lecture material here as well.

These response papers will be graded in 4 "pairs": papers for weeks 2/3, 4/5, 6/7, and 8/9 will be read after the second paper in each pair is turned in. Thus, if you want to make some more general points in the second

paper of each pair (for example a broader synthesis of readings by different authors over both weeks, or comment on lecture/class discussion) this will give you that opportunity.

You can turn in one paper up to one week late without an excuse; additional late papers are penalized one point for each two days late (up to one week late; no papers accepted after that). If you don't have a paper in class, please turn in a short note of explanation indicating when you will turn it in. Please don't email me about late papers (unless you are ill and unable to make class); it is much easier to track written notes as I get 100's of emails a week. Hard copies (no email copies) of late papers should be turned in in class or at my office, 634 PLC (under door if I'm not in), with the date the paper was turned in written on it (please don't ask Sociology staff to date papers).

For the last response paper, due in week 10, I will hand out some questions during week 9 that pertain to the readings for weeks 9/10, and how these tie in with broader course themes. Your response paper (7-8 pages, double spaced) will deal with these questions, which will be broad enough to allow considerable room for creative analysis. Grading: 20 points for each of 4 "pairs" of response papers; 20 points for week 10 paper; 100 points total. Grading scale: 92-100 A; 90-91 A-; 88-89 B+; 82-87 B; 80-81 B-; 78-79 C+; 72-77 C; 70-71 C-; 69- D. (You can calibrate the point/ Grade value of each paper pair using the same percentage scale: e.g. 18.5-20 A; 18 A-; 17.5 B+; 16.5-17 B; 16 B- etc.). Additionally, I will add points for active participation in classroom discussions. There is no final exam in this class.

Graduate students in the class will be expected to write somewhat longer response papers (about 2 pages single spaced). And, graduate students may propose to substitute a longer essay paper for several of the response papers, based on consultation with me.

### **Calendar of Topics, Readings and Class Meetings**

#### **I. Sociology and the International System. The Social Structure of War and Peace in the Post-World War II World. The Rise and Fall of the Cold War. The Vietnam War and American Society. Society and Politics in the Nuclear Age; the Era of "People's War"**

##### **Week 1**

Course introduction and overview. Peace and war as constitutive features of society.

Recommended reading: James Gibson and Francesca Cancian, "Is War Inevitable?" (\*\*); David P. Barash, "The Meaning of Peace" (\*\*) **Video:** "Hearts and Minds" pt 1, or "Why We Fight"

##### **Week 2**

Theories of war, conflict and peace (continued). Debates over the relationship between capitalism and war; Feminist perspectives on militarism and the international system. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Century of War? The Cold War: US-Soviet rivalry and its global impacts. The Vietnam War and revolution in the Third World.

**Readings:** Jonathan Schell, "Introduction", "The Rise and Fall of the War System", "People's War" and "Nuclear War", pp. 1-99 in The Unconquerable World.

Recommended reading: Paul Fussell, "From Light to Heavy Duty" and "Precision Bombing Will Win the War" selections from Wartime (\*\*); Richard Barnett "The Operational Code of the National Security Managers", (pp. 109-133) from Roots of War (\*\*).

**Video:** "Hearts and Minds"

### Week 3

The Nuclear Arms Race and Weapons of Mass Destruction. Nuclear Weapons and U.S. Foreign Policy. Nuclear Deterrence and Terrorism: What's the Difference? The sources of U.S. militarism; the U.S. as the 'sole superpower' and theories of empire.

**Readings:** Chalmers Johnson, Sorrows of Empire, Prologue; Chs. 1, 2 (pp. 55-65), 3, and 4

Recommended readings: Robert J. Lifton, "On Numbing and Feeling"; Carol Cohn, "Nuclear Language, and How We Learned to Pat the Bomb"; Richard Halloran, "Pentagon Draws Up First Strategy for Fighting a Long Nuclear War" (all in \*\*).

**Video:** "The Cuban Missile Crisis", from PBS series "War and Peace in the Nuclear Age"

## II. War and Peace in the Contemporary World: Case Study—from 9/11 to the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

### Week 4

From 9/11 to the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars: Western and US policy in the Middle East. The role of oil in geopolitics. Religion, fundamentalism, and world conflicts. Terrorism, politics, and society. US foreign policy in the Cold War and "Blowback".

**Readings:** Johnson, Sorrows of Empire, chs. 6 and 8; Kanan Makiya and H. Mneimneh "Manual for a Raid" (\*); "Israel Says Children Enlist" (\*).

Recommended reading: Jonathan Barker The No-Nonsense Guide to Terrorism (reserve)

**Video:** "Fahrenheit 9/11"

### Week 5

The origins of the Iraq/Afghanistan Wars. Domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy. The politics of nuclear proliferation. Impacts of war on civilians and society.

**Readings:** Seymour Hersh, "Introduction by David Remnick", "The Iraq Hawks" and "Who Lied to Whom?" parts IV and V of Chain of Command. Newspaper articles: "Counting the Hidden Costs of War", "Study Puts Iraqi Deaths...", "Cleansing Iraqi Bomb Victims..." all in (\*)

**Guest Presentation** on the Iraq War or video: "Why We Fight" or TBA

### Week 6

Iraq War Case Study continued. The nature of the war, and its consequences for Iraqi and US society. Issues of torture, human rights, and security. The U.S. Patriot Act and Civil Liberties. Relationships between the media, democracy, and war/ peace.

**Readings:** Seymour Hersh, "Torture at Abu Ghraib" (part I), "The Secretary and the Generals" (part VI), and "Afterward" in Chain of Command. Short articles by Naomi Klein, Anthony Lewis, and Sasha Abramsky on the issue of torture in (\*); news articles on interrogation of prisoners, human rights, and US abrogation of the Geneva Accords (\*)

**Video:** "Control Room"

### Week 7

The global and longer-term consequences of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars: impacts on the Middle East, world politics, and US society. A global US empire and its alternatives.

**Readings:** Seymour Hersh, “A Most Dangerous Friend” (part VII), “The Middle East After 9/11” (part VIII), “Epilogue” and “Afterward” in Chain of Command. Chalmers Johnson, ch. 10 in Sorrows of Empire.

Recommended readings: Newspaper articles: “Survey Finds Deep Discontent”, “What the Terrorists Have in Mind” and “Ugly Images of Asian Rivals Become Bestsellers in Japan” all in (\*\*).

**Guest Presentation** on the US Patriot Act and civil liberties or Video: “Unconstitutional”

### **III. Changing Dimensions of War, Conflict and Peace. Alternatives to the War System. The Politics of Nonviolence and Peacemaking.**

#### **Week 8**

The Power of Nonviolent Social Movements. Cultures of Peace, and theories of peacemaking. International Alternatives to the War System. Transformations in the Sovereignty of Nation-States. The future of war and peace.

**Readings:** Jonathan Schell, Unconquerable World, chapters 4, 9, 12, 13.

**Video or Guest Presentation** on the politics of non-violence

### **IV. Global Political and Social Transitions in the Contemporary World. International Economic and Environmental Dimensions; the Globalization of the Economy. The Role of Peace, Human Rights, Labor and Environmental Movements.**

#### **Week 9**

World economic, social, and environmental relations: sources of political and social conflict, or cooperation, in the changing world order?

**Readings:** Chalmers Johnson, ch. 9 in Sorrows of Empire; Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costello, and Brendan Smith, Globalization From Below, Introduction and selections TBA(\*).

Recommended readings: Peter Gleick, "Environment and Security: The Clear Connections," Daniel Deudney, "Environment and Security: Muddled Thinking,"; David Korten, "Sustainable Development" (\*\*).

**Video:** Frontline documentary on globalization, “Wal-Mart: Is it Good for America?” or TBA

#### **Week 10**

Changing dimensions of the world economic system and challenges to peace at the beginning of the 21st century. International economics and trade: end of the nation-state? Grassroots movements for a just global system and sustainable societies; the economy as growth machine vs. living in harmony with ourselves and nature

**Readings:** TBA

**Video:** “Affluenza” or TBA