

# **Peace and Nonviolent Resistance**

Friday, September 10 – Saturday, September 11

10a – 4p EDT

<http://challengingwar.com/fall-2021>

## **Schedule**

(The entire conference will be available live via Zoom.)

### **Friday, September 10**

9:30a Coffee and light refreshments

10-10:10a Opening Remarks: Lee-Ann Chae

10:10-10:35a Nathan Goodman, “Nonviolent Resistance as Polycentric Defense”  
(in person)

10:35-11a Q&A

<10 minute break>

11:10-11:35 Heather Eaton, “On the Relationship Between Justice, Peace, and Sustainability”  
(via Zoom)

11:35-12p Q&A

<70 minute lunch break – Lunch will be provided for those attending in person>

1:10-1:35p Andrew Fiala, “Cosmopolitan Pacifism”  
(in person)

1:35-2p Q&A

<10 minute break>

2:10-3p KEYNOTE: Cheyney Ryan, “The Lament of the Demobilized”  
(via Zoom)

3-4p Q&A

## **Saturday, September 11**

9:30a Coffee and light refreshments

10:10-10:35a Tony White, “The Healing Power of Awareness: Nonviolence in Thought,  
Word and Deed”  
(in person)

10:35-11a Q&A

<10 minute break>

11:10-11:35a Iain Atack, “Nonviolent Resistance, Political Power and Social Change”  
(via Zoom)

11:35a-12p Q&A

<70 minute lunch break – Lunch will be provided for those attending in person>

1:10-1:35p Amanda Cawston, “Anger and Injustice: Critical Reflections on Anger as  
Social Practice”  
(via Zoom)

1:35-2p Q&A

<10 minute break>

2:10-3p KEYNOTE: Karuna Mantena, “Gandhi’s Critique of Violence”  
(in person)

3-4p Q&A

## Abstracts

### **Nathan Goodman** (New York University, Economics), “**Nonviolent Resistance as Polycentric Defense**”

Orthodox rational choice theory models defense as a public good provided optimally by a central state. However, this approach abstracts away from the diverse institutions and processes individuals use to provide defense in the actual world. To better understand these real-world institutions and processes, we leverage another concept from rational choice theory: *polycentricity*. A system is characterized as “polycentric” if it features multiple centers of decision-making that can act independently from one another. Using historical examples, we show that polycentric networks of activists can maintain nonviolent social movements that successfully provide defense.

### **Heather Eaton** (Saint Paul University, Conflict Studies), “**On the Relationship Between Justice, Peace, and Sustainability**”

This presentation focuses on the intersection of nonviolence, peace and ecology, incorporating gender analyses. The key insight is to expand nonviolent and peace theories to include ecological dimensions in two ways. The first is to recognize that as ecological decline increases, so does the militarization of the world and the need to protect ecological resources, at times with force. A second way to include ecology in nonviolence and peace theories is to consider Earth-centric rather than anthropocentric frameworks.

### **Andrew Fiala** (Fresno State University, Philosophy), “**Cosmopolitan Pacifism**”

This presentation will show links between political cosmopolitanism, pacifism, and nonviolence. It will argue that cosmopolitan values and institutions are effective at promoting peace. And it will critique resurgent nationalism. We ought to continue to work to transform the nation-state system in a more cosmopolitan direction, while also working to cultivate the values of cosmopolitan and pacific systems of value.

### **Cheyne Ryan** (Fellow, Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law, and Armed Conflict (ELAC)), “**The Lament of the Demobilized**”

For some time now I have been interested in what I call the “soldier pacifist”. This is my term for those who have experienced war and have come away opposed to all war; specifically, they hold that knowing war firsthand compels one to become a pacifist. Pacifism is often charged with being disconnected from reality; this type of pacifism reverses this charge and holds that knowing the

reality of war implies pacifism. So it is a pacifism from the inside out, as it were, and from the bottom up. My paper engages a number of voices in this tradition to reflect on the kinds of claims it is making. My title is drawn from the writings of the great British pacifist, Vera Brittain.

**Tony White** (Binghamton University, Philosophy), “**The Healing Power of Awareness: Nonviolence in Thought, Word and Deed**”

This paper compares methods of nonviolent conflict resolution pertaining to the sociopolitical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal levels, using as paradigms the nonviolent resistance of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., the Socratic method of philosophical dialogue, the nonviolent communication of Marshall Rosenberg, and the peaceful transformation of feelings of Thich Nhat Hanh. Among several commonalities highlighted, chief is their shared assumption that bringing out the attitudes relevant to a conflict into sustained conscious awareness organically tends toward resolution of the conflict. I propose that this works by obliging parties to address the root of the conflict in a way that transcends habitual patterns.

**Iain Atack** (Trinity College Dublin, International Peace Studies), “**Nonviolent Resistance, Political Power and Social Change**”

The central argument of the paper is that an understanding of the connection between nonviolent resistance and political power helps explain both nonviolent resistance as a political strategy as well as the deeper structural changes to societies permeated with multiple types of violence required by nonviolence. The paper asks whether the ultimate objective of nonviolent resistance is to reform or establish the liberal democratic state, for example, or to create forms of social and political organization that challenge and replace power as domination (in the form of both direct and structural violence) with power as cooperation.

**Amanda Cawston** (Tilburg University, Philosophy), “**Anger and Injustice: Critical Reflections on Anger as Social Practice**”

While anger has been criticised as a counterproductive and harmful emotion, it also is often considered an appropriate response to injustice. Moreover, there are important critiques of how oppressed groups are denied permission to express anger, a denial which is associated with norms of submissiveness and which itself constitutes a further dimension of (affective) injustice. Thus, it seems there is reason to encourage or support some instances of anger. However, as Jaggar notes, our emotions are partly habitual responses shaped within a context of oppression and can contradict our conscious commitments. Hence, she calls for reflexive critical examination of the source and suppression of our emotion. In

this paper, I take up this critical project and offer some initial reflections on anger. I sketch an examination of the social practice of anger in modern Western society which suggests the social practice of anger has important connections with its role in oppressive social relations and offers initial grounds to be wary of endorsing or encouraging anger.

**Karuna Mantena** (Columbia University, Political Science), “**Gandhi’s Critique of Violence**”

Gandhi repeatedly claimed that satyagraha was not only morally superior to violence but also more effective practically. To break the worship of force, for Gandhi, one had to disrupt and undo the belief its efficacy. I want to take seriously this claim and explore the theoretical arguments that underpin Gandhi’s critique of violence as a political method. I’ll begin with a close reading of the chapter on “Brute Force” in *Hind Swaraj*, in which Gandhi first illustrates how the use of provocative or violent tactics intensifies dynamics of confrontation and retaliation by unleashing negative passions and egoistic dispositions. I’ll then turn to the incidents of violence that ended the Rowlatt Satyagraha and the Non-Cooperation movement, Gandhi first mass campaigns against British rule. Here, I will examine how Gandhi came to perceive, and then try to correct and mitigate, the tendencies toward violence and coercion within all political action, even ostensibly nonviolent forms of action.

**Conference Organizer**

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