

General Studies Program
The Colorado College
Spring 2005 - Block 8

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General Studies 222

**TOPICS IN GENERAL STUDIES:
CIVILITY AND RESISTANCE**

Medical Building, Room 14
801 North Cascade Avenue

Course Description

Since the beginning of the modern era, civility and resistance have been interrelated social and political concepts. Modern governing institutions, for example, have generally been expected to value and promote civility, particularly in the form of toleration for the opinions of others, while conceding a right of resistance to intolerant or oppressive actions. In practice, however, actual acts of resistance often have been treated as illegitimate if not criminal attempts to subvert democratic judgments. Until quite recently, dissent of all sorts -- whether by racial, ethnic, or sexual minorities, or by working class, religious, or ideological groups -- was limited severely throughout the Western world.

Following the Second World War, the landscape of "normal" society and politics changed considerably. Western democratic societies opened up rapidly, granting suffrage to all adults; confronting discrimination based on class, race, ethnicity, and gender; and embracing a significant degree of diversity in both ways of living and values. As this pluralization of democratic society deepened in the West and began to spread around the world, political and cultural resistance of various sorts also seems to have grown, raising questions about what kinds of practices are compatible with democratic orders.

Tolerance, respect for others, and majority rule seem to be necessary foundations for legitimate democratic orders. Yet, what if minorities disagree fundamentally with their fellow citizens? Must they respectfully conform to the majority will? If they refuse and attempt to disrupt order, are their actions necessarily undemocratic? To what extent does democratic civility require limiting disruptive dissidence? This course will explore the histories of civility and resistance, and inquire into the challenges and dilemmas presented by new resistance practices. Topics discussed include historical events, such as the Wars of Religion, the development of manners, the Second World War, anti-colonial insurgencies, and the rise of new forms of social and cultural resistance, including radical environmentalism, racial and sexual liberation movements, and evangelical religious mobilizations. New arguments for civility will also be explored. Readings will include historical, literary, philosophical, and political works.

Course Goals

The primary aim of the course will be to help students understand some key cultural, social, and political dilemmas of the present, in part by tracing this era's development from the past, and in part by examining closely competing evaluations of the problems of civility and resistance. At the same time, the course will seek to introduce students to a variety of influential texts and arguments that, one hopes, students may find interesting on their own terms -- whether as works of literature, treatises in philosophy, or studies in the social sciences.

In addition, the course will aim to develop students' abilities to read, interpret, and respond to such complex texts. Refining and developing interpretations of the texts we read will be emphasized through a number of very short writing assignments, combined with discussion and presentations in class. Two longer papers (4-5 pages and 5-6 pages) will aim to give students chances to develop and defend their own judgments about the problems the course will investigate.

Course Requirements

Reading. This course will have a heavy yet quite rewarding reading list. Students will be expected to keep up with the reading throughout the block. Plan to spend a fair amount of time reading *before* attending class and, at times, re-reading after class. In general, texts are to be brought to our meetings so that they may be referred to in our discussions.

Course Meetings and Discussion. Most course meetings will consist largely of discussion. Individual students may be assigned to lead discussions or to take part in debates on particular topics periodically. Students should expect to attend class meetings consistently and punctually, and to discuss the subjects and texts under investigation in a civil manner. Performance in discussions will strongly influence the participation grade.

Writing. Students will write six 1½-2 page reaction papers, one 2-4 page reaction paper, and two somewhat longer essays (4-5 pages and 6-8 pages). The longer papers are to be typed (i.e., word-processed), double-spaced, and annotated in accordance with accepted norms of scholarship (that is, with citations and notes). Detailed requirements for the reaction papers appear at the end of this syllabus. Unexcused late papers will be downgraded one step per hour tardy. There will be no scheduled examinations.

Required Texts

Barry Lopez, *Resistance* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2004)
 Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Democracy on Trial* (Basic Books, 1995)
 André Gide, *The Immoralist* trans. Richard Howard (Vintage International, 1921, 1996)
 Mahatma Gandhi, *Selected Political Writings*, ed. Dennis Dalton (Hackett Publishing, 1996)
 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, trans. George J. Backer (Schocken Books, 1948, 1995)
 Martin Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War (1954-1962)* (Berg, 1997)
 Stephen L. Carter, *Civility: Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy* (HarperCollins, 1999)
 Derrick Bell, *Ethical Ambition: Living a Life of Meaning and Worth* (Bloomsbury USA, 2003)

Additional Readings

Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government, or Civil Disobedience," from American Transcendentalism Web, assembled by Professor Ann Woodlief, Virginia Commonwealth University (1999): <<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/thoreau/civiltext.html>> (downloaded, reformatted, and corrected, 20 April 2005)
 _____, "A Plea for Captain John Brown," ed. Bradley Dean, from American Transcendentalism Web, assembled by Professor Ann Woodlief, Virginia Commonwealth University (1999): <<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/thoreau/johnbrown.html>> (downloaded and reformatted, 20 April 2005)
 Dave Foreman, "EARTH FIRST!" in *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, eds. Terence Ball and Richard Dagger. (HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 402-409.
 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, rev. ed. (Blackwell, 2000):
 - Part I, chap. 2: "The Sociogenesis of the Concept of Civilization in France," pp. 31-43;
 - Part II: "Civilization as a Specific Transformation of Human Behavior," sections I-III, pp. 47-72.
 - Part II: on bedrooms, men and women, and aggression, sections VIII-X, pp. 136-172.
 John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, from *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes* (1924), vol. V, appearing in the *Online Library of Liberty* (Liberty Fund, 2004): <http://oll.libertyfund.org/Texts/Locke0154/Works/HTMLs/0128-05_Pt01_FirstLetter.html> (downloaded and reformatted 15 April 2005) [22-page pdf]
 _____, *Two Treatises of Government*, vol. 2, chaps. 9, 14, 18-19, from John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Thomas Hollis (London: A. Millar et al., 1764), appearing in the *Online Library of*

- Liberty* (Liberty Fund, 2004):<http://oll.libertyfund.org/Texts/Locke0154/TwoTreatises/0057_Bk.html> (downloaded and reformatted 15 April 2005)
- Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Republic of Silence," in *Defeat and Beyond: An Anthology of French Wartime Writings, 1940-1945*, eds. Germaine Brée and George Bernauer (Pantheon, 1970), pp. 330-35.
- Albert Camus, "Part One: The Rebel" in *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt* (Vintage, 1991), pp. 13-22.
- Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence," in *Wretched of the Earth* trans. Constance Farrington, (Grove Press, 1963), pp. 35-106.
- Michael Geyer, "Resistance as Ongoing Project: Visions of Order, Obligations to Strangers, and Struggles for Civil Society, 1933-1990," in *Resistance against the Third Reich, 1933-1990* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 325-50.
- James C. Scott, "Domination, Acting, and Fantasy," in *Paths to Domination, Resistance, and Terror*, eds. Carolyn Nordstrom and JoAnn Martin (University of California press, 1992), pp. 55-84.
- James C. Scott, "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups," in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 183-201.

Other supplemental readings may also be assigned as the block unfolds. All additional and supplemental readings will be available as electronic reserve readings and, where possible, as regular reserve readings. The website for this course's E-Reserve readings may be accessed directly by going to:

<http://coloradocollege.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=254>

Grading and Attendance Policies

Grades will be assigned on an 100-point scale and weighted in the following manner:

1. First paper (4-5 pages)	Thurs., 5 May	30%
2. Second paper proposal due in class	Mon., 9 May	1%
3. Class presentation on proposal	Fri., 13 May	3%
3. Second Paper (5-6 pages)	Mon., 16 May	35%
4. Six reaction papers (1½-2 pages each)	Various dates	12%
5. Final reaction paper (2-4 pages)	Wed., 18 May	4%
4. Participation		<u>15%</u>
TOTAL:		100%

The reaction papers will be graded minimally: plus, check, minus, zero. For more detail on this requirement, see the last page of this syllabus.

Regular, timely attendance and active participation in discussion are essential parts of the course – worth 15% of your final grade. Unexcused absences and regular tardiness will be noted and will affect grades negatively. If you have a good reason to be absent or late, notify me as soon as possible. Be sure to write a note (so that I remember!) as well as speak to me.

The schedule of assignments appears above and below. You will be expected to meet all of these deadlines. Exceptions will be made only in extreme and unavoidable circumstances. If you expect to submit a paper late, contact me immediately. Either see me in my office, or give me a note or an e-mail message explaining your circumstances. If religious observances or other serious obligations conflict with the course schedule, let me know as soon as possible, and we can work out an alternate schedule for you.

Plan to attend class for the whole period, focusing on coursework throughout. If you have a good reason for arriving late or leaving early, please notify me in advance in writing (e-mail is best). If you cannot notify me in advance, do so as soon as you can afterwards.

As a courtesy to all, please turn off pagers and telephones while in class.

Honor Code

Students will be expected to abide by the Honor Code. Among other things, the Honor Code specifies that you will be responsible for producing all of your own work and that you will always cite the works or ideas of others used in your work. However, discussing your ideas and your writing with others is *not* a violation of the Honor Code. In fact, it is a good idea to compare your ideas and writings with those of others and to ask others for criticisms of your work. And using other people's ideas can also be a good idea – if their ideas are good and you credit the authors for developing the ideas.

Office Hours/Communication

I will hold office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-3 p.m. I am also generally be in my office (132 Armstrong) in the afternoon. The easiest way to meet with me would be to make an appointment after class, or contact me via telephone (x6564) or e-mail (dmcennerney@coloradocollege.edu).

Note that this entire syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, TOPICS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: All assignments are to be completed *before* class.
Class will meet from 9:20 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., with a 15-minute break, unless otherwise noted
* Indicates electronic reserve reading.

I. Problems of Resistance, Civility, and Democratic Order

- Monday, 25 April Introduction
Begin readings as soon as possible! (Lopez is somewhat long.)
- Tuesday, 26 April Moral Resistance: Modern and Contemporary Paradigms
a. *Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government, or Civil Disobedience" and "A Plea for Captain John Brown," pp. 1-20, 1-21.
b. *Foreman, "*EARTH FIRST!*" in *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, eds. Terence Ball and Richard Dagger (Harper Collins, 1991), pp. 402-409.
- Suggested reading:
Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, pp. 1-188.
Michael Martin, "Ecosabotage and Civil Disobedience," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (Winter 1990), pp. 291-310.
- Wednesday, 27 April Imagining Resistance after 9/11
a. Lopez, *Resistance*, pp. 3-70.
b. Lopez, *Resistance*, pp. 71-176.
- Thursday, 28 April Civic Life in America: A New Endangered Species?
a. Elshtain, *Democracy on Trial*, pp. xi-63.
b. Elshtain, *Democracy on Trial*, pp. 65-138.
PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

II. A Very Short History of Civility and Its Problems

- Friday, 29 April On the History of Civilization and Manners in Europe
a. *Elias, *Civilizing Process*, pp. 31-43, 47-72.
b. *Elias, *Civilizing Process*, pp. 136-172.
- Monday, 2 May Religious Resistance, Toleration, and Constitutionalism
a. *Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* [22-page pdf]
b. *Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chaps. 9, 18-19.
SECOND PAPER ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED.
- Tuesday, 3 May Civility and Its Limits: Living beyond the Norm
a. Gide, *The Immoralist*, pp. xii-93.
b. Gide, *The Immoralist*, pp. 93-171.

Wednesday, 4 May An Eastern Challenge: Gandhi and Liberating Civility
 a. Gandhi, *Selected Political Writings*, pp. 29-91.
 b. Gandhi, *Selected Political Writings*, pp. 97-151.

Thursday, 5 May Writing Day
FIRST PAPER (4-5 PAGES) DUE AT 5 P.M.

III. Demanding Action: Resistance after Totalitarianism

Friday, 6 May Europe in Question: Confronting Fascism and Communism
 a. *Sartre, "The Republic of Silence," pp. 330-35.
 b. *Camus, "Part One," *The Rebel*, pp. 13-22

Monday, 9 May Analyzing Europe: The Holocaust and the Fear of Freedom
 a. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, pp. 7-58.
 b. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, pp. 59-153.
SECOND PAPER PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS.

Tuesday, 10 May Revisiting Third World Liberation: Is Violence a Necessity?
 a. *Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 35-106.
 b. Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, pp. 24-44.

Wednesday, 11 May Direct Action? The Emergence of Resistance Consciousness
 a. Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, pp. 44-145,
 b. Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, pp. 170-71, 181-96, 231-33.

Thursday, 12 May Rethinking Resistance
 a. *Geyer, "Resistance as Ongoing Project," pp. 325-50.
 b. *Scott, "Domination, Acting, and Fantasy," in *Paths to Domination, Resistance, and Terror*, pp. 55-84; and "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups," in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, pp. 183-201.

IV. Civility and Resistance in the Contemporary Era: Acts, Theories, Conflicts

Friday, 13 May Contemporary Resistance: Multiple Visions
Students present works of their choice from reading list.

Monday, 16 May Writing & Reading Day
SECOND PAPER (5-6 PAGES) DUE AT NOON.

Tuesday, 17 May The Call for Civility
 a. Carter, *Civility*, pp. 3-114.
 b. Carter, *Civility*, pp. 115-249.

Wednesday, 18 May The Call to Conscience
 a. Bell, *Ethical Ambition*, pp. 1-178.
 b. Bell, *Ethical Ambition*, pp. 250-68.
FINAL REACTION PAPER (CARTER & BELL) DUE 7 A.M.

Summary and Reaction Paper Assignments

Over the course of the term, students will write at least six short, informal summary-and-reaction statements. These pieces should be divided into two parts:

- a) stating in summary form what strikes you as the most significant or interesting point (or two points) made in the assigned text or texts ($\frac{1}{2}$ – 1 page); and
- b) explain your reaction to that aspect of the reading (1 – $1\frac{1}{2}$ pages).

These statements should be the equivalent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 word-processed, double-spaced pages – so about 375-525 words long. The format is informal: your statement should list your name, the date, the assignment (the authors, titles, and chapters/pages discussed), and your own title at the top. You should divide the statement into two parts, one summarizing the reading's most important point or points and the other giving your reaction to the reading. You need neither quote nor cite the text, though you can, if you think it important to do so. The statements should be written in clear, Standard English prose. The style may be informal.

As you write, don't try to summarize *all* the points made in the reading. Focus on one or two points that seem highly significant *to you*. This point or these points ought to have led you to think about something that seems important, significant, or meaningful. This point or these points need not be central to the reading, although in most cases I expect they will be. You may well write about some minor aside that an author makes, if that aside has led you to begin thinking. Just be sure to explain clearly and accurately what the authors say when you claim the authors argue something. Also, explain your reaction, your interest, your thought process. When I say, "explain," I don't mean saying that something is "interesting" or it has "made you think." Instead, identify what *in particular* strikes you as interesting, or what *specific problems or ideas* the reading raised for you, and then give the reader some sense of why any of these ideas seem important or significant to you. What has led you to react in the way you have?

This assignment is meant to be focused both on the reading and on your thoughts insofar as they relate to the readings. For the second half of the papers, you may explain why the authors' claims seem to you wrong-headed, or really cogent; why they excite or repel you; why they have made you think of something in a new way, or why they seem to point to a dead end. You may explain why the piece seems really bad or really good to you. This assignment lets you think aloud, as it were. However, the first part of the paper should accurately summarize what the author says.

The assignment also, I hope, will further four other aims. First, it will give you a chance to work on mastering the readings, as well as to demonstrate to me that you have done the reading. If there are parts of the readings that you don't understand, then write about the problems you have in seeing the author's points. I'll try to address those problems, either directly, by commenting on your paper, or indirectly, in class. Second, these assignments are designed to give you some easy practice in writing clearly and coherently. The more you learn to clarify your thoughts on paper, the better off you will be as a writer and student. Third, your comments may provide food for thought for you and your fellow students in class discussion and when you prepare to write more formal essays.

These papers will be graded minimally: plus, check, check/minus, minus, zero. I may add no or only a few comments.

- Plus: a) the paper clearly and coherently develops an idea; b) it also accurately and fully summarizes what the readings say; and c) it convincingly and clearly shows why this point or line of thought is significant to you.
- Check: the paper is a serious effort that contains a reasonably accurate summary and a serious reaction.
- Minus: the paper is just thrown together, it lacks careful thought, or it is wildly inaccurate about the reading.

Pluses will earn extra credit (2.5%), with checks gaining full credit (2%), check/minus (1.5%) and minuses (1%) partial credit. I give pluses very rarely. A check is the equivalent of an "A+" already for 2% of your final grade.

There are 17 authors assigned in this course. You must write reaction papers on six of them, but you may write on additional authors. – in which case only the six best grades will be counted for the final grade. No late papers will be accepted. Finally, all papers will be e-mailed not only to me, but also to the entire class, for use in our discussions. Note: Reaction papers must come from across the term. There must be at least **two** from each of the three lists following:

- I. Thoreau, Foreman, Lopez, Elshtain.
- II. Elias, Locke, Gide, Gandhi.
- III. Sartre, Camus, Fanon, Evans, Geyer, Scott.

In addition, all students will write a final 2-4 page reaction paper on Carter and Bell at the end of the block (4% value).