# **SENIOR SEMINAR: Spring 2019**

# Theme: Faith and Violence

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# Senior Seminar description

The Senior Seminar focuses on an area of theological study related to the practice of ministry, providing M.Div. students in their final year of study an opportunity to integrate the various elements of their theological education in a way that contributes to the ongoing discernment of their vocation. Students will produce a substantial essay or project that brings the methods of theological study to bear on problems and opportunities in ministry and that expresses the student's theological vision.

# **Course: Faith and Violence**

Violence in our contemporary world has many stimuli and manifestations. It impacts the lives of people of diverse ethnicities, cultures, geographical, economic and social realities. Though the causes and manifestations are diverse, the results for many people are the same - violence results in pain and suffering for many of the parties involved. As leaders of faith communities, students will be called upon to respond to violence in various forms throughout their ministries. In this course, students will grapple with violence in the Bible and in contemporary life, and study a variety of constructive Christian responses to violence, in order to develop strategies for addressing violence in their own contexts.

# **Course goals**

As a senior seminar, this course will provide an opportunity for senior students to integrate theological study with pastoral practice and build their capacity for contextual theological-ethical interpretation and analysis. The instructors will work with students to create a space for free, creative, and collaborative theological experimentation/play and discovery.

Students will

- 1. Bring their passions for ministry and theological reflection into productive conversation with religious and cultural traditions,
- 2. Gain practice in the practices of vocational discernment and ethical discipline,
- 3. Refine their skills of constructive theological and ethical reflection and expression,
- 4. Work towards a deeper understanding of the roles of vocation and ethics in the practices of ministry and the life of faith,
- 5. Continue processes of vocational discernment that are theologically grounded, ethically informed, and that draw on several theological disciplines (biblical studies, historical and constructive theology, ethics, homiletics, practical theology).

With regards to the particular subject matter of this course, the following student learning outcomes (SLO's) will be emphasized:

SLO3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of multiple theological perspectives, historical and contemporary.

SLO7: Students will give evidence that they are conscious of multiple forms of oppression and injustice, including sexism, patriarchy, classism, heterosexism and poverty and able to identify strategies for responding to them.

SLO8: Students will demonstrate the ability to think theologically, strategically, imaginatively, and contextually about ethical issues.

# *SLO9: Students will be able to preach and teach and provide pastoral care*.Course requirements

- 1. *Preparation and participation*: Students are expected to attend all seminar meetings, read all assigned material, and enter into thoughtful discussion of the matters the class takes up. "Special Assignments" should be posted on CAMS by midnight on the Sunday before the Monday class each week, and students should have access to their assignments in class. Students are partners to one another in their work for this course, so conscientious preparation for each seminar meeting is essential.
- 2. *Topic Description and Progress report*: Students will submit a description of the topic on which they will work in this seminar (due Week 3), and a revised description outlining progress made toward the goal of a completed essay or project, with a bibliography (due Week 5).
- 3. *Sermon*: Students will submit one sermon manuscript using their choice of suggested texts, and preach it during class on April 8. Manuscripts must be 3-5 double spaced pages and are due on April 1. Resources for sermon development are referenced in the syllabus.
- 4. *Senior Seminar essay or project*: The culminating project of the seminar will focus on an area of interest that relates in some way to the seminar topic. The topic should emerge from the student's own theological interests and passions. The project may be expressed in the writing of a substantial essay (about 20 pages). It may also be a performance, a particular practice of ministry, a liturgical project, curriculum, or a work of art, in which case the project submitted would include some demonstration of the practice (where applicable) together with a substantial, written critical analysis (10-15 pages). The final determination of the project, its scope, and resources necessary to produce it will be the work of the student together with the instructors, in collaboration with the other seminar participants. Students, thus, will have an opportunity to draw on the perspectives of their colleagues as the project is conceived and undertaken.
- 5. *Work-in-Progress Presentation and Sample Reading:* Students will present to the seminar their work in progress (weeks of April 29 and May 6), submitting <u>five days in</u>

<u>advance of the presentation (April 24 and May 1)</u> a written summary (4-6 pages) that will serve as the basis for a student colleague's prepared response (see 6., below). In addition, students will be asked to assign a short reading to accompany their presentations to the class of their work-in-progress. These reading assignments should also be submitted five days in advance (April 24 and May 1).

6. *Response paper*: Students will write a short (2-3 page) response to a student colleague's class presentation of their final essay or project.

# **Required Texts**

- Jones, Serene. *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.
- Manchala, Deenabandhu. Nurturing Peace: Theological Reflections on Overcoming Violence. Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 2005.

Matfess, Hilary. *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons and Witnesses*. London, England: Zed Books, 2017.

McClure, John and Nancy Ramsay, eds. *Telling the Truth: Preaching about Sexual and Domestic* 

Violence.https://www.ministrymatters.com/files/164/Telling\_the\_Truth.pdf

West, Traci C. Wounds of the Spirit: Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Quindlen, Anna. Black and Blue: A Novel. New York: Random House, 1998.

# **Academic Honesty**

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of the available resources at an early date, since violations of seminary policy on academic honesty can lead to a failing grade for the course.

# **Inclusive Language**

The use of inclusive language in course work is a policy of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, avoid language for people that leaves out part of the population or perpetuates stereotypes. Do not assume masculine gender when the gender of the person is unknown. When referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors. See <a href="http://www.lpts.edu/Academic Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp">http://www.lpts.edu/Academic Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp</a>.

# CALENDAR Week of February 11 • Introduction to the course

Quindlen, Anna. Black and Blue: A Novel. Pp. 3-37.

Creach, Jerome F. D. *Violence in Scripture* Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church, ed. Patrick D. Miller. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013, 125-152.

Read Judges Chapter 11 and Chapter 19

**Special Assignment**: Write a 1-2 paragraph response to the questions about the Judges texts: What does the willingness to sacrifice the bodies/lives of their daughters say about the way each of the fathers in these texts views women and understands God?

#### Week of February 18 • Domestic Violence

Clapsis, Emmanuel, ed. "Domestic Violence: Violence Against Women" in *Violence and Christian Spirituality*. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007. Pp. 133-147.

West, Traci C. "Contemporary Testimony from Interviews" in *Wounds of the Spirit Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics.* Pp. 30-51 "Emotional and Spiritual Consequences," in *Wounds of the Spirit Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics.* Pp. 55-88.

Quindlen, Anna. Black and Blue: A Novel. Pp. 91-132, 268-293.

**Special Assignment:** Write a one-paragraph response to each of these questions about the novel *Black and Blue*: How is grace mediated to Fran/Beth? How does growing up in a violent household impact Robert?

#### Classroom guest: Kilen Gray, speaking on pastoral responses to family violence

Special Assignment: Topics for final project due

# Week of February 25 • Constructive Responses to Domestic Violence

West, Traci C. "Maintaining the Momentum, Sustaining an Ethic of Resistance," in *Wounds of the Spirit Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics*. Pp. 181-207.

McClure, John and Nancy Ramsay. *Telling the Truth: Preaching about Sexual and Domestic Violence,* 

<u>http://books.google.com/books?id=evfZ4msdViUC&printsec=frontcover&dq=john</u> +s.+mcclure&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false

Part 1: Theological and Biblical Perspectives (read essays by Wendy Farley and Shawn Copeland); Part 2 Pastoral Resources for Telling the Truth (read essays by Marie Fortune and James Poling)

Podcast by alum Tim McNinch on how to preach Bathsheba and David with sensitivity to those who have experienced assault <u>http://firstreadingpodcast.com</u>.

#### Week of March 4 • Community Violence

Jones, Serene. Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World. Pp. 3-42

Matfess, Hilary. *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons and Witnesses*. London, England: Zed Books, 2017. Chapters 1, 3, 5.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Pp. 221-261, 292-296.

**Special Assignment:** Bring to class a news story about a contemporary example of community violence. This can be national or international. Be prepared to explain why you chose it.

#### Week of March 11 • Police Brutality

Holmes, Malcolm D. and Brad W. Smith. *Race and Police Brutality: Roots of an Urban Dilemma*. Pp. 1-36, 57-78.

"The Ferguson Declaration: A Black Lives Matter Creed" (2016). https://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2016-08/ferguson-declarationblack-lives-matter-creed-long-version. Angie Thomas, *The Hate U Give*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017, excerpt.

"Black lives matter: a theological response to racism's impact on the black body in the United States" <u>http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\_arttext&pid=S1017-</u> 04992017000100001

# Week of March 18 • RESEARCH & STUDY WEEK - NO CLASS

# Week of March 25 • Constructive Responses to Community Violence and Police Brutality

Jones, Serene. Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World. Pp. 43-97

Culbertson, Diana. "Preaching the Word in a Culture of Violence." *Word & World* 24, no. 1 (2004): 58-65.

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Nonviolence: The Only Road to Freedom" Available from: <u>http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/nonviolence-the-only-road-to-freedom/</u>

Matfess, Hilary. *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons and Witnesses*. London, England: Zed Books, 2017. Chapter 7 (A Way Forward)

Class: Watch clips of MLK speaking on non-violence **Special Assignment:** Description and Bibliography for Final Project Due

#### Week of April 1 • Religiously Motivated Violence

Brandon Withrow, "Is There a Christian Double Standard on Religious Violence?" https://www.thedailybeast.com/is-there-a-christian-double-standard-on-religious-violence

Collins, John J. "The Zeal of Phinehas: The Bible and the Legitimation of Violence" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122, no. 1 (2003): 3-21

Myers, Jacob D. "In Compassion and Sympathy: A Christian Response to Religious Violence" Huffington Post, 09/25/2014 Available from:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jacob-d-myers/in-compassion-andsympathy\_b\_5883328.html

Sacks, (Rabbi) Jonathan, "Not in God's Name" <u>https://www.korenpub.com/media/productattachments/files/l/o/look\_inside\_-</u> <u>not\_in\_god\_s\_name.pdf</u>

# Special Assignment: Sermon manuscripts due 4/1/15

# Week of April 8 • Preaching on Violent Texts

**Special Assignment:** Read all the class sermons (posted on CAMS) and bring copies of your sermon to class. The class will be divided in half, and each student will preach his/her sermon, followed by class discussion.

# Week of April 15 • Military Violence

*After Fire* (documentary film about the struggles faced by women veterans after they leave military service) by Transform Films, 2017.

Jonathan Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*. New York, NY: Scribner, 1995. Chapter 1, 2, & 3. Read also the 2008 interview in NYT about his work with veterans: <u>https://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/us/13shay-interview.html</u>.

Brian Powers, "Moral Injury and original sin: the applicability of Augustinian moralpsychology in light of combat trauma (Theology Today 73, no. 4 (January 2017)

**Special Assignment:** Write a one-paragraph response to each of these questions about the book *Achilles in Vietnam*: From Shay's perspective of the men involved in the War on Vietnam, what justifies their violence? How does the violence experienced and perpetrated continue to affect them after the war is over? **OR** write a 1-2 paragraph response to questions related to *After Fire*: What are some of the unique traumas experienced by women in the military that are not also experienced by most men? How does the violence experienced by the women continue to affect them after the war is over?

# Week of April 22 • Constructive Responses to Military Violence

Manchala, Deenabandhu. Nurturing Peace: Theological Reflections on Overcoming Violence. Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 2005. Read entire publication.

Reinhold Niebuhr, "Why the Christian Church is Not Pacifist" In Miller, Richard B., ed. *War in the Twentieth Century: Sources in Theological Ethics*.

Allman, Mark, and Tobias Winright, "When the Shooting Stops" *Christian Century*, October 5, 2010, 26-29.

Long, D. Stephen. "What about the Protection of Third-Party Innocents? On Letting your Neighbors Die." In York and Barringer, eds. *A Faith Not Worth Fighting For*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012. Pp. 18-30.

# Week of April 29 • Work-in-progress presentations

(Summaries and short reading assignments due on April 25)

**Special Assignment:** Write a 2-3pp. written response to one classmate's presentation, as assigned.

# Week of May 6 • Work-in-progress presentations

(Summaries and short reading assignments due on May 2) and Concluding reflections

**Special Assignment:** Write a 2-3pp. written response to one classmate's presentation, as assigned.

#### Week of May 13 • Final Projects Due

**Some Suggested Sermon Texts** (you may choose another passage for your sermon in consultation with the instructors)

• **Genesis 19:24** God kills everyone (men, women, children, infants, newborns) in Sodom and Gomorrah by raining "fire and brimstone out of heaven."

- **Exodus 2:11-12** Moses murders an Egyptian after making sure that no one is looking.
- **Joshua 6:21** "Then they devoted to destruction by the edge of the sword all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys."
- Joshua 7:24-26 "And Joshua ... took Achan ... and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his sheep... And all of Israel stoned them with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."
- **1 Samuel 6:19** "The people mourned because the LORD had made a great slaughter among the people."
- Judges 1:17, 19 "They defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and devoted it to destruction ... And the LORD was with Judah."
- 2 Samuel 13 Rape of Tamar and murder of Amnon
- 2 Samuel 18:6-7, 21:11, 29:5 Military feats of David and Saul
- **1 Kings 2:24-5** Solomon has his brother (Adonijah) murdered.
- **1 Kings 2:29-34** Solomon carries out the deathbed instructions of his father David by having Joab murdered.
- **Psalms 137:9** "Happy shall they be, who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!"
- Acts 5:1-10 Death of Ananias and Sapphira
- **1 Peter 2:18-23** Advice to slaves: "for it is a credit to you if...you endure pain while suffering unjustly."
- Revelation 19: 17-21 Vengeful vision of the death of enemies

# Faith and Violence Bibliography

#### <u>Books</u>

- Adams, C. and Marie Fortune. *Violence against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*. New York, Continuum, 1995.
- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press, 2012.
- Balko, Radley. *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces*. New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2013.
- Brock, Rita Nakashima and Susan Thistlethwaite. *Casting Stones: Prostitution and Liberation in Asia and the United States.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- Cahill, Lisa. *Love your Enemies*: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Charles, Daryl. *Between Pacifism and Jihad: Just War and Christian Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005.
- Clapsis, Emmanuel, ed. *Violence and Christian Spirituality*. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007.
- Creach, Jerome F. D. *Violence in Scripture* Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church, ed. Patrick D. Miller. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013,
- Day, Linda, and Carolyn Pressler, eds. *Engaging the Bible in a gendered world: an introduction to feminist biblical interpretation in honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006.
- Dietrich, Donald J. *Christian Responses to the Holocaust: Moral and Ethical Issues*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003.
- Ellul, Jacques. *Violence: Reflections from a Christian Perspective*. New York: Seabury Press, 1969.
- Erickson, Victoria Lee and Michelle Lim Jones. *Surviving terror: hope and justice in a world of violence*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2002.
- Fortune, Marie. Sexual Violence: The Unmentionable Sin. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983.

- Hoffman, R. Joseph. *The Just War and Jihad: violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.* Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2006.
- Holmes, Arthur F. War and Christian Ethics: Classic and Contemporary Readings on the Morality of War. Grand rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Holmes, Malcolm D., and Brad W. Smith. *Race and Police Brutality: Roots of an Urban Dilemma*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2008.
- Hunsinger, George, Torture is a Moral Issue: Christians, Jews, Muslims, and People of Conscience Speak Out. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Kirk-Duggan, Cheryl. *Misbegotten Anguish: A Theology and Ethics of Violence*. St Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001.
- McClure, John and Nancy Ramsay, eds. *Telling the Truth: Preaching about Sexual and Domestic Violence*, available at <u>http://books.google.com/books?id=evfZ4msdViUC&printsec=frontcover&dq=j</u> <u>ohn+s.+mcclure&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false</u>
- Miller, Richard B., ed. *War in the Twentieth Century*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1882.
- O'Connor, Kathleen. *Lamentations and the Tears of the World*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.
- Quindlen, Anna. Black and Blue: A Novel. New York: Random House, 1998.
- Reimer, James. *Christians and War: A Brief History of the Church's Practices and Teachings*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Slattery, Michael. Jesus the Warrior? Historical Christian Perspectives & Problems on the Morality of War & The Waging of Peace. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007.
- Townes, Emilie. *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993.

- Tirimanna, Vimal, ed. *Catholic Teaching on Violence, War, and Peace in our Contemporary World: A Collection of Essays.* Brooklyn Park, SA, Australia: ATF Press, 2007.
- Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984
- West, Traci C. Wounds of the Spirit: Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Williams, Rowan. The Truce of God. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

- Wink, Walter. Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way. Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2003.
- Wink, Walter. Peace Is the Way: Writings on Nonviolence from the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000. (Sixty essays by some of the world's most inspirational voices address theories, practices, and spiritualties of nonviolence.)
- Winn, Albert Curry. Ain't Gonna Study War No More: Biblical Ambiguity and the Abolition of War. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.
- York Tripp and Bronson Barringer, eds. A Faith Not Worth Fighting For. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012.

# Journal and Newspaper Articles and Blogs

- Allman, Mark, and Tobias Winright, "When the Shooting Stops" *Christian Century*, October 5, 2010, 26-29.
- \*Collins, John J. "The Zeal of Phinehas: The Bible and the Legitimation of Violence" Journal of Biblical Literature 122, no. 1 (2003): 3-21
- Culbertson, Diana. "Preaching the Word in a Culture of Violence." *Word & World* 24, no. 1 (2004): 58-65.

Goodman, J. David, Al Bakerdec, and *Wave of Protests after Grand Jury Doesn't Indict Officer in Eric Garner Chokehold Case* New York: The New York Times, 2014, accessed January 30 2015; Available from <u>http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/04/nyregion/grand-jury-said-to-bring-nocharges-in-staten-island-chokehold-death-of-eric-garner.html?\_r=0</u>.

- Hunsinger, Deborah van Deusen. "Bearing the Unbearable: trauma, gospel and pastoral care" *Theology Today* 68, no. 1 (2011): 8-25.
- \*Juergensmeyer, Mark. "Is Norway's Suspected Murderer Anders Breivik a Christian Terrorist?" *Religion Dispatches*, 04/17/2012 Available from: <u>http://religiondispatches.org/is-norways-suspected-murderer-anders-breivik-a-christian-terrorist/</u>
- Kennicott, Philip. "After Senate's report on CIA interrogation tactics, it's time to see who we really are" *Washington Post*, 12-10/2014
- King, Martin Luther Jr., "Nonviolence: The Only Road to Freedom" Available from: <u>http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/nonviolence-the-only-</u> <u>road-to-freedom/</u>
- King, Martin Luther. *The Power of Non-violence*. (1957) <u>http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1131</u>
- King, Martin Luther. *Nonviolence and Racial Justice*. <u>http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=468</u>
- Lerner, Michael. "Mourning the Parisian Journalists yet Noticing the Hypocrisy" Blog Post 01/09/15
- Myers, Jacob D. "In Compassion and Sympathy: A Christian Response to Religious Violence" Huffington Post, 09/25/2014 Available from: <u>http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jacob-d-myers/in-compassion-and-</u> <u>sympathy\_b\_5883328.html</u>

Roetzel, Calvin. "The Language of War (2 Cor. 10:1-6) and the Language of Weakness (2 Cor. 11:21b-13:10)." *Biblical Interpretation* 17 no 1-2 2009, pp. 77-99.

- Sayilgan, Zeyneb and Salih Sayilgan. "Bediussaman Said Nursi's Ethics of Nonviolence: Implications for Christian-Muslim Relations Today" *Dialog* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 242-252.
- Shinkman, Paul D. Ferguson and the Militarization of Police New York, NY: U.S. News & World Report News, 2014, accessed January 30 2015; Available from <u>http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2014/08/14/ferguson-and-the-shocking-nature-of-us-police-militarization</u>.

Turner, Mary Donovan. "Lenten Light: Domestic Violence and Preaching." *Journal for Preachers* 30, no. 2 (2007): 22-27.