Advocates and practitioners of non-violent opposition to imperialism and other evils often look to M. Gandhi for inspiration and direction, envisioning him as having been the embodiment of these practices and principles. Indeed, Gandhi projected himself as a living "experiment with truth." This seminar will explore the history and meanings of Gandhi as exemplar of non-violent non-cooperation with evil.

During his early years in South Africa and later life in India, Mohandas K. Gandhi developed and implemented a revolutionary political strategy: satyagraha. Gandhi drew on two traditions to formulate this powerful type of civil disobedience, synthesizing Indian principles of non-violence (as part of a universal moral order) with British principles of jurisprudence, citizenship, and the dignity of the individual. Satyagraha is best glossed as "non-violent non-cooperation with evil." In Gandhi's hands, this innovative strategy proved convincing to its Indian practitioners and likewise to many Euro-Americans, both who confronted and those who adopted or adapted it. At the same time, a number of critics of Gandhi and his policies have stressed what they feel are the costs and limitations of his method.

In order to comprehend Gandhi's use of satyagraha, we must understand its social, religious, and political contexts. This course will begin with a look at Gandhi and the culture which produced him. Here we will search for the Indian roots of non-violence and the concept of a universal moral order which encompasses both the cultural and natural worlds. We will then turn to Gandhi's other source for satyagraha: his training as a barrister and his formative years in London society. We will thus seek understanding the presuppositions for these distinct moral and juridical orders.

Gandhi's arenas for his formulation and application of satyagraha were the colonial worlds of South Africa and India. Called to South Africa as a fledgling Indian barrister, Gandhi found himself leading the Indian community against the newly created, racist policy of apartheid. His successes in South Africa then enabled him to assume a leading role in the Nationalist struggle in India against British imperialism. We will examine Gandhi's role in these two arenas through his revealing autobiography and other sources.

Gandhi's political successes against the British in South Africa and India led to the use of satyagraha in other contexts as well. Gandhi himself worked (with more limited results) for the reform of Indian society, particularly with respect to prejudice against untouchables and women. Free India's political leaders have dealt variously with Gandhi's heritage. For his disciples, both prominent and unheralded, Gandhi left a complex role to emulate. Using Gandhi's own writings (including his autobiography and manifesto, Hind Swaraj), fiction, and more critical evaluations (various articles available on Blackboard) we will study some later uses of satyagraha within India. Further, we will see the problems faced by governments advocating non-violence while simultaneously reforming and protecting the world's largest democracy.

"Mahatma" Gandhi's principles of civil disobedience have been applied in a range of political and social reform movements within and outside of India as well. A number of Indian and other leaders interacted with M. Gandhi or his principles. Each student will select one such leader or movement for a research paper and class presentation. Examples of leaders or
movements may be chosen—with the assistance of the instructor—either from India or from elsewhere in Asia, Africa, Europe, or the Americas. This ongoing comparison of political strategies with the Gandhian civil disobedience movement will provide additional breadth to the course.

Reading of the required materials and class participation are mandatory. There will be a series of four position papers, a research paper of approximately 5,000 words (~20 pages) using primary sources, and a brief class presentation of that research.

Research Paper guidelines:

Each person in the colloquium will select (in consultation with Mr. Fisher) a research

2/9 Introduction: Gandhi's significance and non-violence in world and Indian contexts

Required (all four readings): Autobiography: xi-xv and (on Blackboard) BBC: GandhiPen.doc (2 pp.) and PalestinianGandhi.doc (2 pp.) and Mazzarella, "Branding the Mahatma" (39 pp.).

2/13 (Sunday at 6:00 PM) You are invited to my home (241 Oak St., 775-1728) for a dinner.
2/14 (Monday due by noon) Position Paper #1 on the nature of gender, rights, and law. Use Autobiography: 3-83 plus either Jack, "Care and Rights" (24 pp.) or Hay, "Between Two Worlds" (15 pp.) as your source.