1. OMNI PACIFISM NEWSLETTER #1, October 27, 2012.
Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace and Justice.

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For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and:
ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change.

PACIFISM
WHAT IS PACIFISM?

Here is the first of many pages on pacifism from google:

1. Pacifism - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
[edit] Definition. Pacifism covers a spectrum of views, including the belief
that international disputes can and should be peacefully resolved, ...
Pacifism is a commitment to peace and opposition to war. Our ordinary language allows a diverse set of beliefs and commitments to be held...

Pacifism is a belief that violence, even in self-defence, is unjustifiable under any conditions and that negotiation is preferable to war as a means of...

Pacifism is the theory that peaceful rather than violent or belligerent relations should govern human intercourse and that arbitration, ...

opposition to war or violence as a means of settling disputes; specifically: refusal to bear arms on moral or religious grounds...

Pacifism is the moral principle that the use of force is wrong for any reason. This applies to both the initiation of force, as well as defensive or...


HISTORY

WORLD WAR I TO 1980s

"Votes for Women, Chastity for Men,"

_A Review by Brian Harrison in The London Review of Books (Jan. 21, 1988) of four books:_


- _Sex and Suffrage in Britain, 1860-1914_  

- _Women, Marriage and Politics, 1860-1914_ by Pat Jalland  

- _An Edwardian Mixed Doubles: The Bosanquets versus the Webbs. A Study in British Social Policy, 1890-1929_ by A.M. McBriar  

Social movements have been in vogue among British historians since the 1950s. This is partly because Labour’s agenda, strangely combining statist welfare and libertarian protest, has dominated the political and intellectual climate. But there is also a professional reason for these historiographical priorities. The reaction against the narrowness of the old political and constitutional history has never been complete: by choosing social movements as their theme, historians could simultaneously ride the old and respectable horse of political history and the new and fashionable one of sociology. Political history provided a secure chronological framework while they ventured forth into the vast unknowns of social class, religious denomination and regional culture. Edward Thompson’s _Making of the English Working Class_ (1963) was a landmark here, and we now possess histories of feminism, pacifism, of the movements against slavery and cruelty to animals, and for free trade, family allowances, factory-hours and public health, to name only a few. . . .
Caroline Moorehead aims to portray ‘what modern pacifists are actually like’, and to bring out ‘their style, their diversity, their origins and their eloquence’. With much sympathy she emphasises the range of their reforming interests and their loneliness. Above all, she reminds us that moral courage is less common, because more difficult to sustain, than physical courage. She describes the terrible persecutions that conscientious objectors often had to face on their own. Their sufferings become all the more vivid when recollected in tranquillity by mild, ageing and patently humane people in their pebble-dashed, trimly-gardened terrace house in Sea-ford, or in their bow-fronted sitting-room in Croydon. She presents her informants with all the skills of the journalist and we see from her book how interviews can lend impact and immediacy to studies of recent social movements. Moorehead has also taken the trouble to visit many of the places she discusses – in Britain, Japan, West Germany and the United States – and her comparative approach often clarifies what is distinctive about the peace movement in particular national cultures: millenarian tendencies in America, for instance, or anti-Nazi complications in Germany. Hiroshima’s and Nagasaki’s victims played a unique role in a Japanese peace movement which encountered extraordinary governmental secrecy about the bomb’s effects.

All this should have made Troublesome People an outstanding success. Unfortunately the book illustrates the disintegrating tendency of ‘oral history’ when unaccompanied by a clear analytical framework. In its later chapters, Moorehead’s comparative analysis degenerates into a sort of travel diary, and her grasp of international relations and political sociology is not clear enough to set the experience of the individual pacifist firmly into context. There is a further difficulty. While sympathy is essential to effective historical writing, it can all too easily sacrifice proportion. Given the book’s stress on the awfulness of the weapons and on the reasoned independent-mindedness of their critics, the non-joining, by standing general public is implicitly presented as blankly hostile, stupid, uncomprehending, callous and even (through its agents) brutal. Take Moorehead’s approach to A.J.P Taylor’s breathtakingly naive rhetorical question at a CND meeting in 1958: ‘“Is there anyone here who would do this to another human being?” Silence. “Then why are we making the damned thing?” Thunderous applause.’ Whatever happened at the meeting, the question begs for a rejoinder, yet Taylor gets off scot-free . . . .

WORLD WAR I

--Dahlberg, Keith. Edwin T. Dahlberg: Pastor, Peacemaker, Prophet. Judson P, 2010. Dahlberg was a pacifist pastor who became a conscientious objector during WWI. During the Vietnam War he was part of a fact-finding team to visit the country. Dick
Conscience was named one of the ten best books of the month by Barnes and Noble this week, putting a story that details the life of one of FOR’s early leaders in a prominent and deserving place on bookshelves across America. This is the story of the conscience that informs conscientious objection as a core element of the birth of FOR as manifest in the biography of Norman Thomas and his brothers Ralph, Evan, and Arthur told by Norman’s great-granddaughter Louisa Thomas. Ms. Thomas shared a pre-release copy which I read over the Memorial Day weekend and review below. She also agreed to answer some questions raised in my mind by the book. These follow the review.

Louisa Thomas never uses the word quixotic to describe the lives and passion of her great-grandfather, Norman Thomas, his pacifist brother Evan or their soldier siblings Ralph and Arthur. But the nostalgic, ambivalent echo of lives largely unrewarded, when spent in loyalty to conscience, gives a certain reverence to this family biography, and you can almost see them tilting at the windmills of idealism.

While Norman Thomas carries the most recognition for his long tenure as the perennial candidate for President from the Socialist Party, an early member and significant leader of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and other early 20th-century pacifist organizations, and editor first of The World Tomorrow (now Fellowship magazine), and later The Nation, his brothers are equally central pillars of this story.

Ralph, the second born, is trained as an engineer and enlists in the first world war. A Princeton and MIT graduate with officer qualities, he is wounded at the front and hospitalized; never returning to his regiment, he avoids further injury in combat. He debates the pacifist case his brothers make his whole life, but offers a forum for Norman’s views from time to time. He loses one son to the second world war.

Arthur, the youngest brother, is torn between training for mission work in Asia — which would exempt him from service — and a vision of flying. In the end he joins the Army air corps and trains as a pilot, but the war ends before he is tested as a soldier. Two sisters are a part of the
family portrait, but less central to the story here.

“After World War I, Norman wrote a book called The Conscientious Objector in America... The dedication was to his brothers, with whom he had so often disagreed. That book was, therefore, a family story, and so is this,” says Louisa Thomas in her preface. But “In the Thomas brothers' history, we all might find some of our own.” Her promise here, as well of those in a glowing set of dust jacket epigraphs by Doris Kearns Goodwin, Walter Isaacson, Jon Meacham, and Hendrik Hertzberg, among others, is completely fulfilled. Exhibiting a satisfying balance of family affection and journalistic objectivity, Thomas describes an era and set of ideas which still demand our consideration today.

In an age when we obsess on a theory of the separation of Church and State, this story reminds us that citizenship, for most Americans, is still an ongoing dialogue between political and religious ideologies which together define both individual and corporate biographies in deep and important ways. “At the time, the church was part of the engine of social reform, no less than law. The progressive spirit drew some of its fervor from a sublimated Protestant moralism.” The voice of Thomas from the pulpit moved rather easily to the voice of Thomas from the public soapbox, more easily than in a world after Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr., another scion of the age of conscience as it slowly evaporated from the pulpit of the 21st century descendants of this story. (Coffin’s grandfather, Henry, was a mentoring peer of the Thomases.)

The description of the McKinley-Bryan presidential race and the rise of populism at the end of the 19th century, cannot be read without the color of current politics tinting the view.

“Populism can be ugly, infused with racism and xenophobia. In those days, many populists encourage farmers to fear foreigners, who, they suggested, would take their work and 'dilute' their culture and blood. They sometimes embraced policies potentially more ruinous than the ones they meant to fix. At the same time, populists kept alive egalitarian ideas that countered the inequalities and excess of the Gilded Age. The people demanded to be heard, and their demand was backed by combustible energy.”

Among the wonderful accomplishments of the story is the clear sense of development over the lifetimes of the family members, we see the growth of clarity and commitment to pacifism, even when it requires somewhat monumental movement from conservative Christianity to progressive Socialism, on the part of Norman and Evan. It captures well the notion of crystallization of conscience emerging in the current literature to describe the experience of war on those wrestling with the moral issues of killing. And it also explores with intimacy and
elegance the space for tolerance in a family with widely divergent views, especially in the portrait of the family matriarch, Emma Thomas, who serves as a reconciling intermediary even as her own values are challenged by her children's choices.

It is true that this is not the fully ordinary family. As students at Princeton University, three of the Thomas brothers personally knew — and were known and admired by — Woodrow Wilson, allowing for a nuanced sense of drama as Wilson listened to but rejected the case Thomas made to avoid the war and Evan made to respect conscientious objectors. The FOR nexus is even richer as Evan’s mentor, John Nevin Sayre, was a successor to Norman as general secretary of FOR, was also the brother-in-law of Wilson’s daughter and he exercised Eleventh Hour access more than once on behalf of the Thomas’s views.

The continuing movement to the margin of progressive religious voices is often prefigured in the life of Norman and Evan, who, in seeking to make a difference, to do something that had meaning, found themselves looking beyond the Presbyterian Church in which they were raised and trained for ministry. The longing to do good may have found, for them — especially Norman — expression in the Socialist agenda, but that portal opened and peaked only briefly during their lifetime and has been subjected to the same pejorative attack as progressive faith-based conscience since. Louisa Thomas writes that “In 1911, hundreds of Socialists had been voted into office in elections around the country, including fifty-six mayors and a congressman…. Few realized that 1912 [in Eugene Debs run for President against Taft and Teddy Roosevelt] would be, in fact, the peak of the Socialist’s prospects.”

The surprising, beguiling ease with which the country moved from the impossibility of any war to the inevitability of a world war during Wilson’s term as President unfolds clearly in Louisa Thomas’s narrative. The surprising, disturbing slide to censorship and suppression of dissent fuels the sense of injustice with war and warring for the Thomas brothers. The careful exploration of an emergent, organic understanding of conscience as the root issue in conscientious objection is the richest gift of this biography. It should serve to stir a deeper discourse on the place of conscience in political, theological, economic and social life today. We can be grateful to the Thomases and their peers for close and serious thinking on conscience, and especially to this grand-daughter for offering this story.

For this reviewer, who serves in the lineage that extends from Norman Thomas and John Nevin Sayre, through the lines of A.J. Muste and Father John Dear among others, and who followed the path to conscientious objection during the Vietnam war (made more passable and even smooth by the precedent of the Thomas brothers and many others), and finds himself related
by marriage to military policy-shapers like General Stanley McChrystal, I did find, in this story, much of my own. Having done alternative service in The Lebanon and studied at the American University of Beirut, I met descendants of Cleveland Dodge, and a career in the YMCA meant that John R. Mott, Kirby Page, and Sherwood Eddy shaped my life and career in ways very similar to those of the Thomases a generation earlier. But I recommend it more fully in the confidence that, so well written and so fully relevant to the continuing questions of conscience and war, every reader will find it entertaining and enlightening.

Mark C. Johnson, Ph.D. Executive Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation

June 14, 2011

The following exchange with author Louisa Thomas took place over the course of the week of June 12, 2011...

Dick’s comment on the book:  I agree with all of this review, so it is maybe a little churlish to point out how thin the book appears when compared to Hochschild’s To End All Wars. Hochschild’s book on warriors and pacifists during WWI recalls though it does not match novels in the great tradition from Bleak House and Moby Dick to Magic Mountain and Women in Love. This is the tradition of major immersion in particularized individuals developing in time and place in a density and closeness of point of view. Of course these books are necessarily long, while Thomas’s is only 275 pages (and Hochschild’s only 100 pages longer)!

WORLD WAR II

1. PBS - THE GOOD WAR: World War II Pacifists
   www.pbs.org/itvs/thegoodwar/ww2pacifists.htm/Cached - Similar
   You +1’d this publicly. Undo
   The vast majority of Americans supported World War II after Pearl Harbor was bombed, recognizing a fascist threat to Western democracy. Over the years, it has ...

2. Pacifism - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
   en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacifism/Cached - Similar
   You +1’d this publicly. Undo
   Jump to Between the two World Wars: In the aftermath of World War I, there was a great revulsion against war, leading to the formation of War Resisters' ...

3. The Dilemmas of British Pacifists During World War II - JStor
   www.jstor.org/stable/1877299/Similar
   You +1’d this publicly. Undo
Nicholson Baker in "Why I'm a Pacifist: The Dangerous Myth of the Good War," Harper's (May 2011) argues that Hitler was foremost a hostage-taker, and that the allies early in the war at least should have tried to negotiate with Hitler to rescue Jews, as the pacifists at the time urged (Abraham Kaufman, Dorothy Day, Jessie Wallace Hughan, Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, Vera Brittain, Arthur Ponsonby, Clarence Pickett, Bertha Bracey, Runham Brown, Grace Beaton, Victor Gollancz, to name a few). Instead, the allies chose retribution, air war, firebombing, and the Holocaust continued. The pacifists were practical (there are numerous smaller examples of saving Jews and
other objects of Hitler's enmity); they sought to save lives. Dick Bennett.

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Pacifist and Nazi Resistor

ANTI-NUCLEAR

The View from This Seat

Thursday, October 20, 2011

In Praise of Daniel Berrigan

Daniel Berrigan, the anti-war Jesuit priest who turned 90 in May of this year, has been a fervent advocate of peace for decades. As I have been thinking about him recently, I am writing this as another posting of my “in praise of” series. (Click on “praise” in the label column on the right to see others postings in this series.)

Especially you who are 60 or older doubtlessly know something about Berrigan, who first became widely known in the late 1960s. He and his brother Philip (1923-2002) became highly visible anti-war/peace activists during the Vietnam War. After that war ended, they continued to oppose nuclear weapons.

Some of you may harbor a fairly negative image of Daniel and Philip Berrigan. For several years up to the end of the war in Vietnam they were greatly criticized by the media as well as by many within the Catholic Church. (Like his older brother, Philip was also a priest.)

The Berrigan brothers, with a few others, engaged in numerous acts of civil disobedience to protest what they believed to be an unjust war. They were two of the “Cantonville Nine,” nine people who in May 1968 went to the draft board in a Baltimore suburb, took 378 draft files, brought them to the parking lot in wire baskets, dumped them out, poured homemade napalm over them, and set them on fire.

They were arrested, of course, and after a few months as a fugitive, Daniel was in prison from August 1970 to February 1972. Earlier, in 1967, he had been the first priest in U.S. history to be arrested for a protest against war. He was in jail only five days that time.
Then in September 1980 the Berrigan brothers and a few others began the Plowshares Movement. They illegally trespassed onto a nuclear missile facility in Pennsylvania, where they damaged nuclear warhead nosecones and poured their own blood onto documents and files.

Earlier this month I finished reading Daniel’s autobiography, *To Dwell in Peace* (1987), and I was much impressed by his life story and especially by his dedication to peace and justice. (I was also impressed by the splendid prose in which the book is written.)

In the book, says that when the church yields “before the politics of the virtuous versus the ‘kingdom of evil,’ we become, willy-nilly, the spiritual arm of ever-renewed violence” (p. 156). Unfortunately, that seems to have been the case often, and is seen in the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I am now reading *Daniel Berrigan: Essential Writings* (2009), selected with an introduction by John Dear, who was mentored by Berrigan. Dear (b. 1959) is also a Jesuit priest and an avid anti-war/peace activist; he has been arrested more than 75 times.

Dear writes that Berrigan “remains a beacon of hope to peace-loving people everywhere” (p. 24). For that reason I am happy to post these few words in praise of Daniel Berrigan, who for far more than half his ninety years has been an extraordinary prophet and peacemaker.

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**PACIFIST FILMS OR PACIFISM IN FILMS**

Here is the first page of google on pacifist films:

1. **Designing Pacifist Films** (Paul Goodman)
   
   What, then, are the available resources of pacifist persuasion that can be used for a pacifist film? They can be roughly classified as: ...

   [www.cddc.vt.edu/bps/CF/goodman.htm](http://www.cddc.vt.edu/bps/CF/goodman.htm) - Cached

2. **Anarcho-Pacifist Films**
   
   About Me. Anarcho-Pacifist Films. View my complete profile ... Posted by Anarcho-Pacifist Films at 9:56 PM 1 comments ...

   [anarcho-pacifist.blogspot.com](http://anarcho-pacifist.blogspot.com/) - Cached - Similar

3. **Films with keyword: Pacifism** - AllMovie
   

   [www.allmovie.com/keyword/pacifist-3054](http://www.allmovie.com/keyword/pacifist-3054) - Cached

4. **"Hollywood's Answer to War" by William M. Drew**
   
   Mar 7, 1998 ... It seems that for every pacifist film, there have been a dozen Stallone, Schwarzenegger and Norris "action" movies glorifying violence as ...

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5. militant pacifism « The League of Dead Films
Jan 21, 2011 ... Bringing dead films back to life one review at a time ... Jules Verne, Kirk Douglas, mastermind, militant pacifism, musical interlude, ...
https://professormortis.wordpress.com/tag/militant-pacifism/- Cached

6. Movies | Japan trilogy "Human Condition" puts pacifism to harsh ...
Aug 31, 2008 ... Masaki Kobayashi's brilliant pacifist classic — the nearly 10-hour "Human Condition" — gets a rare revival at SIFF Cinema in September. ...
seattletimes.nwsource.com/.../2008144818_condition31.html –

Pacifism - Europa Film Treasures
Results of your research: Pacifism. Discover Europa Film Treasures films.
Here: Results of your research: Pacifism.
www.europafilmtreasures.eu/research/pacifism-0.htm -

7. Feminism, Pacifism & Environmentalism: The Messages of Hayao Miyazaki
May 13, 2010 ... After meeting Ashitaka, she starts realize that violence will not solve the problem, which is of course the film's pacifist message. ...
www.justpressplay.net/.../6605-motifs-in-the-films-of-hayao-miyazaki.html -

8. 5001 nights at the movies - Google Books Result
Pauline Kael - 1991 - Performing Arts - 945 pages
(The year 1930 was, of course, a good year for pacifism, which always flourishes between wars; Milestone didn't make pacifist films during the Second World ...
books.google.com/books?isbn=0805013679...

END PACIFISM NEWSLETTER #1