



Socialist and Marxist Studies Series

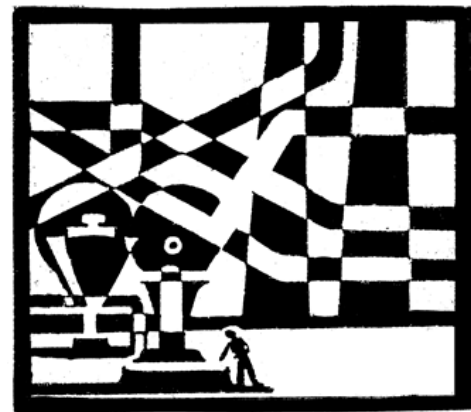
Spring 2024

Thursdays

12:30-1:45 P.M.

Bangor Room, Memorial Union

The University of Maine



NOTE: In-person program with the following Zoom link

provided for those who cannot be there: <https://maine.zoom.us/j/81161830306>

April 4: MAHATMA GANDHI AND HIS PAST AND PRESENT CRITICS: MARXISTS, SOCIALISTS, DALITS (“UNTOUCHABLES”), FEMINISTS, AND OTHER CRITICS

Doug Allen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, The University of Maine

During his life (1869-1947), Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (best known as Mahatma Gandhi) was often regarded as the most admired moral, political, and spiritual figure in India and throughout the world. For example, Albert Einstein famously asserted that future generations would scarce believe that anyone such as this ever walked the earth in flesh and blood. Einstein asserted that Gandhi's political views were the most enlightened and that we should act in Gandhi's spirit, not using violence and not participating in evil. Even in 2024, Mahatma Gandhi is extolled as the world's greatest proponent of nonviolence and the most admired moral and spiritual figure for our present and future world.

Nevertheless, Mahatma Gandhi was always controversial, with strong anti-Gandhian critics during his lifetime and this continues today. Critics include many Marxists, anti-Gandhian socialists, Dalits (untouchables, outcastes), diverse feminists, traditional and conservative Hindus and other religionists, and representatives of what Gandhi regarded as “Modern Civilization” (capitalists and other modern economists, modern political theorists, modern scientific and technological experts). What were and are the controversies, and what are the strengths and weakness of Gandhi's views and of those of his critics regarding violence and nonviolence, war and peace, morality, religion, education, ecology, and truthful living for us and for the contemporary world?

In this presentation, Doug Allen will describe several of these key controversies between Gandhi and his anti-Gandhian critics, interpreting the strengths and weaknesses in Gandhi's positions and those of the critics. Allen will propose that when we selectively reread, reinterpret, and reappropriate Gandhi-informed positions and those of his critics and then bring them into dynamic dialectical relations, we can open up possibilities for a creative paradigm shift with new radical and revolutionary ways of addressing our personal and worldly crises today and in the future.

Doug Allen retired in 2020 after 46 years as Professor of Philosophy at UMaine, He has authored 18 books, including 5 on Mahatma Gandhi, and he has been a peace and justice activist.

Next Program: April 11: PANEL ON SOCIALIST AND MARXIST VIEWS OF LABOR

ORGANIZING organized by **Kyra Pederson**. The detailed flyer on this panel of young UMaine and community activists will be posted soon.

The Spring 2024 Socialist and Marxist Studies Series is coordinated by Doug Allen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy. The series is sponsored by the Marxist and Socialist Studies Minor, co-sponsored by Division of Student Life, with support of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Dept. of Philosophy. Speakers do not necessarily present socialist or Marxist viewpoints. For additional information, contact Doug Allen at dallen@maine.edu or Kyra Pederson at kyra.pederson@maine.edu.

PLEASE ANNOUNCE TO CLASSES AND INTERESTED GROUPS AND LIST IN CALENDARS

i

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, familial status, ancestry, age, disability physical or mental, genetic information, or veterans or military status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director of Equal Opportunity, 5713 Chadbourne Hall, Room 412, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5713, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).