

PHS News

August 2020

Newsletter of the Peace History Society www.peacehistorysociety.org



President's Column



Michael Clinton

Only six months removed, it's difficult to recall what the world felt like when the previous issue of the PHS Newsletter appeared in January. The political, social, and health crises that we currently face, while discernible in the distance or simmering beneath us, had not yet burst into the urgent conflagrations that now demand immediate attention and action. The crisis of American political leadership was approaching its desultory climax in a Senate

acquittal to rebut the House vote that impeached Donald Trump. Although patterns of racial injustice continued as they always had, #Black Lives Matter had [reached its peak](#) as a Twitter hashtag in July 2016. You could use one hand to count the number of Covid cases diagnosed in the United States, and many students whom I met in an actual classroom on my university campus had no idea what "Covid-19" meant. Over the past several months, however, the officers and board members of the Peace History Society have consulted about what to do in response to the radically altered circumstances that have arisen just since March.

Most recently, Kathleen Kennedy, Wendy Chmielewski, and Toshihiro Higuchi served on an *ad hoc* committee that worked with other PHS officers and board members to produce a statement in support of the varied expressions of protest against the long, deep, unresolved issues of racial injustice occurring not only here in the United States but in solidarity around the world. You can read the statement published in this issue of the PHS Newsletter or on [the PHS website](#). Presented to the PHS membership for a vote in July, it passed with 31 Yes votes, 0 No, and 2 abstentions. The statement reaffirms the Peace History Society's commitment to racial justice in our scholarship, classrooms, institutions, and communities and provides a first step in a sustained process that requires the active participation of the PHS membership. We are now considering how to act in specific ways on the statement's commitment "to analyze the actions and methods of movements in the past and present that have contributed to positive social change by working to undo racism, and emphasize this work in our research and writing..." As PHS members, you are all encouraged to contact me directly with proposals about how the PHS might use its resources to act on this

commitment as we move forward. My thanks go to Kathleen, Wendy, and Toshi, especially, to all those who contributed to and offered comments about the statement, as well as to those who voted.

The statement provides opportunities for sharpening the focus of the next Peace History Society conference, scheduled to take place at Kennesaw State University in October 2021, even as the Covid-19 pandemic poses the challenge of how the conference will take place. Several conferences that I had planned to attend this year were cancelled, decisions made in response to conditions that have not ebbed— here in the United States, at least— and are likely to get worse before they get better. We don't know yet whether or how much they will get better by October 2021, and so this autumn the PHS board will explore how to organize next year's conference.

Abrupt and extreme circumstances have forced us to rethink what we do and how we do it, but it's worth reflecting how so much of what the PHS has done and how has changed since its founding in 1964, albeit more often more gradually. Fortunately, there always seem to be members like Ginger Williams willing to complete the tasks that sustain the PHS, making it the collegial home that so many of us find it to be. I single Ginger out because this issue marks her first as editor of the PHS Newsletter. In previous years, Ginger has served as PHS president, its treasurer, host of two of PHS conferences (2005 and 2009), and probably some other roles that I don't know or am forgetting. As the ground shifts, as times change, the PHS manages to shift and change as needed because a corps of old(er) members and a crop of new ones are willing to do new things and to do old things in new ways.

Please give serious consideration, then, to nominating yourself for one of the six positions on the PHS board or one of the

officer positions available for election later this year. Once a nominating committee has formed, members will receive an invitation to submit their own names or the names of someone else to stand for one of these positions, including my own.

Although this is my last President's Column, it will not be the last communication that you receive from me as PHS president, with critical issues yet to address and, if not resolve, at least to move towards some resolution. Still, it is a suitable opportunity to extend my thanks to the PHS membership for affording me the privilege of serving this two-year term as president and to all those who've provided (and continue to provide) guidance and support in many ways throughout my term.

Peace,
--Mike Clinton

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Peace History Society Statement in Support of Black Lives Matter and the Work to Undo Racial Injustice and Oppression

As historians and scholars who study the dynamics of peace and justice, we recognize that state-sponsored and extrajudicial violence has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color. We stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and all those currently protesting racist violence in the US and internationally. As scholars, we remain dedicated to analyzing interlocking systems of violence and seeking solutions that can build enduring peace with justice. We are committed to promoting anti-racist scholarship, teaching and activism as well as fostering inclusive and open discussions about racial privilege and violence in our organizations and institutions. We remain committed to positive actions that dismantle institutionalized oppression against people of color and other marginalized groups. Since the May 25 killing of George Floyd and others in Black communities, we have joined our neighbors, our colleagues, and our students to march, protest and demand an end to structural racism, lynching, and police brutality. We abhor the words and

deeds of those in the U.S. government who have responded to this popular cry for justice with violence. Federal, state, and local governments have deployed the military, spied on nonviolent demonstrators, and dispersed orderly assemblies with excessive force. Many of these same authorities have ignored white supremacist vigilantes who threaten demonstrators exercising their constitutional rights. The alarming trends in police violence and militarization, along with extralegal violence, are not limited to the United States. From Hong Kong to Santiago, Moscow to New Delhi, we have witnessed government authorities, police, and militant groups brutally suppressing peaceful protesters. The erosion and violation of human rights anywhere in the world should be the concern of all. The Peace History Society strongly condemns violence, whether by governments or paramilitary organizations, and stands in solidarity with those seeking liberty, equality, and justice through nonviolent means.

As peace historians, we renew our commitment and will redouble our efforts to explore, analyze and articulate the conditions for positive, just peace. We will strive to contribute to the process of undoing racism in the following ways:

In Our Scholarship:

We will continue to analyze the actions and methods of movements in the past and present that have contributed to positive social change by working to undo racism, and emphasize this work in our research and writing, as well as in *Peace and Change* and our conferences.

In Our Classrooms:

We will strive to build understanding about racism and oppression in our societies and introduce students to scholarly examinations of the processes that can build the trust and dialogue through which these crises can be addressed.

In Our Institutions

We will work to make our colleges, universities, and associations diverse and inclusive.

In Our Communities

We will share our understanding of the processes of positive social change so that we can learn and teach about building connections with the diverse array of groups and individuals working to address systemic racism, oppression, and violence.

--Submitted by Michael Clinton,
President

Suttneriana: News about Bertha von Suttner

Anyone familiar with the biography of Bertha von Suttner knows that Harmannsdorf (near Eggenburg, Lower Austria), is where she lived and worked for almost two decades in the castle that belonged to the family of her husband. It was mainly from here that she conducted a large correspondence with the likes of Alfred Nobel and Leo Tolstoy, among many others. The castle was in a somewhat dilapidated state when Dr. Erich Glawischnig, a professor of veterinary medicine at the University of Vienna, became the new proprietor in 1976. Over the years, the Glawischnig family have undertaken extensive restoration works of the castle and the various buildings in the adjoining park. He was the founder of the International Bertha von Suttner Association, with a seat in the castle; the Association aims to promote her legacy through the organization of conferences, seminars, exhibitions, concerts, plays and other cultural activities. Many take place in the large and beautifully restored, late 17th century former granary in the grounds of the castle. The 2005 travelling exhibition *Bertha von Suttner: A Life for Peace* is permanently

displayed in the Orangery. In 2005 the Association organized a large international conference (with several PHS members as invited speakers) to celebrate the centenary of the award of the Nobel peace prize to Bertha von Suttner, the first woman peace laureate. The proceedings of the conference were published in 2007. Erich Glawischnig died earlier this year, shortly after celebrating his 90th birthday. He deserves the gratitude of his country, and indeed the world, for nurturing von Suttner's legacy and putting her home (where she penned her famous novel, *Lay Down Your Arms*), firmly on the map again. The Glawischnig family is committed to continue his work. Information about the castle is at http://www.schlossharmannsdorf.at/?page_id=17; about the Association at http://www.berthavonsuttner.at/crbst_15.html The study trip, 'In the Footsteps of Bertha von Suttner in Switzerland' that was originally scheduled to take place in March/April has provisionally been rescheduled for 12-16 October following the outbreak of the Coronavirus. Among the cities visited is Lucerne where, in 1902, she inaugurated, together with Frédéric Passy (first co-laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901), the world's first peace museum, created by Jan Bloch. The first in what is planned to be an annual similar trip to other countries is organized by Historizon, a Dutch travel agency specializing in cultural-historical tourism. This peace tourism pilot is at the suggestion of, and in close cooperation with, the Bertha von Suttner Peace Institute in The Hague. The itinerary ends in Geneva where her extensive archive is preserved in the library of the UN. The January issue of *Historizon Magazine* features the Bertha von Suttner tour on the cover, showing the memorial to the victims

¹ Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

of landmines – a gigantic broken chair by Swiss sculptor Daniel Berset – in front of the main entrance to the UN's *Palais des Nations*. Cf. <https://historizon.nl/thema/reis-bertha-von-suttner/> and p. 30 at <https://historizon.nl/historizon-magazine/>

Interview with Freedom School Head Staughton Lynd

ORGANIZING, ACCOMPANYING, AND NOW . . . WHAT?

Referring to the events of recent months, our grandson asks us, what changes we think will occur and how long will they last?

We recall reading a book by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan suggesting that if protesters are nonviolent, violence against demonstrators is likely to increase support for peaceful protests.¹ And, we recall Barbara Deming saying, nonviolent action does not mean no one will be hurt; but fewer people will be hurt.

Are Chenoweth, Stephan and Deming right? We'll see.

Alice:

During these times of contentious forces becoming more and more polarized, I am reminded of A.J. Muste. Shortly before the birth of our youngest child in 1967, Staughton and I went to see A.J. We were thinking of naming our baby for him if it was a boy. A.J. died six days before our baby was born. She was a girl.

A.J. Muste and a couple of other pacifist ministers accompanied 30,000 textile workers of twenty or more nationalities in the 1919 Lawrence,

Massachusetts textile workers strike (not the more well-known strike in 1912). Under the pressure of police brutality and adverse press coverage, local people sought A.J.'s help in developing the strikers' strategy.

At one point, the police mounted machine guns at the head of the main streets. The strike committee met. In his account, A.J. wrote:

. . . [O]ne after another the local members of the committee, ordinary workers in the mills, made remarks to this effect: "The guns were put there to provoke us; why play into the hands of the mill management and the police? It would only discredit the strike."

It fell to A.J. to explain to the strikers the policy of refusing to be provoked and refraining from violence:

I told them, in line with the strike committee's decision, that to permit ourselves to be provoked into violence would mean defeating ourselves; that our real power was in our solidarity and in our capacity to endure suffering rather than give up the fight for the right to organize . . .
2

The strike dragged on. Just when the strike committee decided they had no right to call on the workers for further sacrifices and A.J. was on his way to explain to other locals that the Lawrence strike had collapsed, he noticed a large car in front of the building where the strike committee met. As A.J. approached, a man got out of the car and told A.J. that the head of the American

Woolen Company Mills in Lawrence wanted to talk with him about settling the strike. At the very moment when the strikers felt they had to give up, management too had decided they could not hold out any longer.³

This spring, as we watched one episode after another of demonstrators with their arms in the air, or sitting on the ground, or taking a knee—sometimes with some policemen joining in—I remembered A.J. who, when times were very dangerous, had not only won the trust of strikers but had been able to settle matters with highly contentious opponents.

Staughton:

At age 90½ I think I can say that I have been present at a good sampling of demonstrations over the past 75 years, and that this one, the eruption of emotion nationwide about the murder of George Floyd, was different.

How different?

To begin with, black and white were in the streets together. The coalition that so many had so laboriously tried to create, happened spontaneously. What makes me so sure that it was leaderless? For one thing, an article by three reporters for *The New York Times* was headlined: "Without Clear Leadership, the New Activism Emerges Organically."⁴ One simply had the sense that dozens, or maybe hundreds, of individuals had phoned or e-mailed their networks of friends, and that these multitudes, having mysteriously decided that the event would be "cool" or "awesome," showed up.

² A. J. Muste, "The Lawrence Strike of 1919," *Liberation*, February, March April 1958, reprinted with permission in Staughton Lynd and Alice Lynd, eds., *Nonviolence in America: A Documentary History* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 3d ed. 2018), Doc. 16, 99-100.

³ *Ibid.* 101-102.

⁴ John Eligon and Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura, "Without Clear Leadership, the New Activism Emerges Organically," *The New York Times*, June 4, 2020, A15.

According to *The Times*, at the site of the homicide a lone voice called out “Sit down!” and lo, the crowd sat. Not long after the same voice said, “Stand up,” and those gathered did that also. But another single voice, belonging to a Marine veteran, responded: “Stop barking orders! You’re not the police.”

At the core, the retrospective custodian of all the news that’s fit to print continued, “is an egalitarian spirit, a belief that everyone has a voice, and that everyone’s voice matters.”

A second distinguishing feature of what has been happening around us in the streets is that the beginnings of a program of action are apparent. The Occupy movement, it will be recalled, began with a similar spirit but faded when a specific program of action on the basis of which people could begin to take small actions and win small victories failed to materialize.

This time, radical activists in Minneapolis and elsewhere seem to have made a transition from words to actions more smoothly. Actions include, first, local, state and national legislation. Choke holds like that which ended George Floyd’s life can be forbidden. Ordinances can be struck from the books that seek to insulate police officers from public oversight in the form of fines or jail terms.

It would be interesting to learn just how the destruction or removal of statues can be re-evaluated. What may matter most is that a movement of this sort, necessarily localized because the statues themselves are widely distributed, seems to have emerged in leaderless horizontality as did the initial mass response to Floyd’s death.

One could go on. An action that only a few years ago seemed necessarily confined to a few brave individuals became suddenly imaginable for participants who sat down together or “took a knee” together. In a few instances’ policemen, the custodians

of order, joined in these protests. Instead of calling the policemen “pigs” the protesters approached the police and improvised actions similar to the actions of those in the ’60s who put flowers in the gun barrels of those sent to restrain them.

The COVID-19 crisis has revealed such deep and pervasive needs for change that it is becoming impossible to imagine that recovery from the pandemic world can return us to business as usual. I have long been troubled by use of the term “nonviolent revolution.” What on earth could this mean? Now I think I have seen what the beginning of a nonviolent revolution might be like. Governments can issue curfews but whether anything happens in response depends on the people in the streets. Provided the scene remains nonviolent as the hour of the curfew approaches, there is no way the government can imprison all those who, as Barbara Deming prescribed, with one hand tell the oppressor to advance no further but with the other hand say, “Join us.”

-Submitted by Alice and Staughton Lynd

Book Review:

*Hellfire From Paradise Ranch:
On the Frontlines of Drone
Warfare* (Berkeley: University of
California Press: 2020)

Hellfire is new on my best-books list. Joseba Zulaika, an anthropologist, takes a deep dive into the American psyche that has underwritten its most shameful acts of war since its atomic bombings of Japan. His subjects are drone pilots at an area of Creech air base near Las Vegas (and the Nevada nuclear test site) nicknamed Paradise Ranch. Freudian theory informs Zuleika’s probe into the crippled masculinity that enables

their robotic killing of “terrorists” in the post-9/11 era. But the reality of the pilots’ disposition lies deeper still in the Lacanian Real-real, the hunter-hunted phantasies hidden within euphemisms of modern warfare such as national defense. The author brings some heavy-duty theorists—Adorno, Foucault, Jung, and Baudrillard among them—to his task, keeping their ideas accessible enough for introductory-level readers.

For Zulaika, drone warriors imagine their human targets not just *as* animals but *to be animals*, animals to be hunted and killed by remote. His description of using drone strikes on civilian Afghanis to draw other humans, first responders, into range for killing—known as a “double tap”—has a sickening resemblance to the use of decoys by duck hunters.

But people-hunting is not a postmodern novelty: Creech air base was once Shoshone land, a tribe killed by an earlier generation of human-hunters. The last chapter of *Hellfire* highlights the Catholic Worker movement for leading the opposition to drone warfare. It’s biographical sketch of Dorothy Day provides a moving context for Zulaika’s own pacifist ruminations inspired while attending a 2016 vigil for peace at Creech with Shoshone and peace activists who included retired Army colonel Ann Wright. *Hellfire*’s Epilogue, “Obama’s Troy,” is a Homeric takedown of Barack Obama made through the parallel of Obama’s assassination by drone of Anwar al-Awlaki in 2011 with Achilles’s slaying of Hector at the gates of Troy—the former a prophecy foretelling terrorism’s return in Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

A book with Mike-Davis historical sweep and enough military techno-talk to interest Botnics, that ends with the author’s self-reflections on war and peace and a lesson in

the relevance of Greek classics, should put *Hellfire* on lots of “best” lists.

-Submitted by Jerry Lembcke of the College of the Holy Cross

Teaching Peace History: Tales of an Interloper

Updating one’s own c.v. can lead to surprises, even insights, and sometimes in the least likely places. Recently, I added The American Catholic Historical Society to the obligatory section of the c.v. that lists professional memberships. I had just joined the ACHS for the first time. (I will soon get to my reason for doing so. Just trust me for now that it’s relevant.) What struck me for the first time was an odd juxtaposition. For some years, I have been a member of the Society for Military History, so no shock to see it listed. But on the line above SMH was the Peace History Society, which I had joined in 2018. I found myself wondering how many vitae are out there on which these two organizations are found in such close proximity. However many that number is, I have come to believe that it’s not enough.

By training, I am a diplomatic historian. I have taught military and “military-adjacent” history for a quarter century, including a course on the United States and the Indochina Wars, which I first taught in 1998. Some years after that, I developed a course on World War II, which I now teach regularly. And though I lack formal training as a military historian, the classes have gone well. As we all know, military historians are a critically-endangered species in the American academy these days, with us “diplos” close behind. I had, however, no sense of how peace history was faring in the American university. I must admit that I still don’t know for sure. But I knew that peace

history had not been taught at GW before, and I thought it was time to balance out my focus on war with a course on peace. In addition, the topic simply interested me.

I should confess here that the original idea for the class was not mine; that I borrowed it. The late Vincent P. DeSantis had offered a similar course during the time when our years in the University of Notre Dame's Department of History overlapped. Each fall, Vince would take a week to attend to the Southern Historical Society conference. A conscientious teacher, he regularly asked me to fill in for him during his travels so that the students didn't miss a week of class. I was happy to do so. In fact, it was in prepping to teach this course that I first came across the name Charles DeBenedetti. I learned much from my reading and enjoyed these weeks tremendously. It was then that the seed was planted. Unfortunately, it took two decades to germinate.

I am very lucky. I teach in a department that gives faculty the leeway to teach classes that interest them. The History Department at GW was quite supportive of the proposed course. So my biggest issue (and anxiety) was whether I knew enough to offer a course on U.S. peace movements. To be honest, I didn't. But, like all of us, I have taught in the past on subjects that were new to me. I knew that I didn't know, and fortunately I knew someone who did. I sent what might be termed a "plaintive" email to Mike Clinton--who, as they say, will need no introduction to the readers of this newsletter. Mike and I are friends from graduate school, and he seemed to be the person to go to. He immediately sent out a note to eminent scholars of peace history, and, equally quickly, they responded. From Wendy Chmielewski, Scott Bennett, Mitch Hall, and Chuck Howlett I received advice, syllabi, book chapters, reading suggestions, and most helpful of all, generous offers to be

in touch anytime that I had questions. With their enthusiastic, benevolent assistance, I was able to put together a syllabus, a reading list, and a couple introductory lectures. I was now ready to launch HIST 2001--"U.S. Peace Movements" in the fall semester of this past academic year.

Having somewhat overcome my anxiety about my lack of preparation, I proceeded to the next worry: Would enough students sign up for the class to be a go? As it turns out, there is a significant demand for this course at GW. Very early in the registration process--on the first day or registration, actually--I found myself exempting students into an already full course. So, with a packed course and a syllabus boasting pictures of Martin Luther King Jr. and Dorothy Day, I set off to class. As always with a new prep, I was ready for a semester of surprises.

I began by asking the students why they had signed up for the course. The answers ranged from the intriguing ("My parents were anti-nuclear activists in the '80s") to the inevitable ("I needed a history credit and this class fit"). So far, so good. It got even better: Our first discussion went brilliantly. And I mean *brilliantly*. I had assigned them Kant's "Perpetual Peace." This decision had me a bit apprehensive. I had majored in philosophy in college, and I recalled thinking that Kant was, along with Heidegger, the most impenetrable thinker whom I had encountered as an undergraduate. But the students had done the reading, understood Kant's points, and caught the nuances. In addition, they were able to relate his ideas to contemporary issues. We were off to a terrific start. This was clearly evidence of my brilliance as a teacher!

Then came the second discussion. This time, I had assigned relevant sections of John Woolman's journal. Unlike Kant, the majority of the students found Woolman

baffling. One bumptious undergrad even advised me privately not to use this reading again--adding gently that he knew this was my first time through, and so didn't blame me for the misfire. Which was nice of him when you think about it. (Despite this student's "advice," I plan on bringing Woolman back for a return engagement, but with a more extensive introduction of the reading.)

These were just some of the things that surprised me early on as the students met this material for the first time. But I can also easily identify *their* greatest surprise. Students remarked--both during the semester and in their course evaluations at the end of term--that they had no idea of the deep roots of American peace movements. The fact that peace history in the U.S. went back to colonial times absolutely astonished them. Multiple students remarked that they thought we'd "spend most of our time on Vietnam." The fact that there were objectors during the War of the American Revolution was a revelation. And the presence of such people among the "Greatest Generation," was nothing short of riveting. I clearly was teaching them something.

But I wasn't the only one to do so. One of the most rewarding parts of the class for me was the connections that I was able to make. As I have already noted, Mike Clinton had put me in touch with some of the leading scholars in the field. These folks were a tremendous--indispensable really-- help in getting the course off the ground. I am exceptionally grateful to those scholars. In particular, Scott Bennett of Georgian Court University not only gave me great advice, but also ventured all the way down from New Jersey--and actually found parking in Foggy Bottom!--in order to teach the class one day. Mike Clinton did the same, making the trek from, appropriately, the City of Brotherly Love to speak about

his current research, and, more generally, the field of peace history.

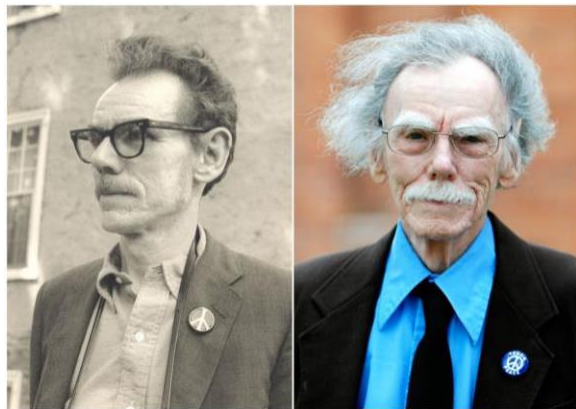
Mike began his talk by asking why one should study peace history. He then spoke convincingly about creating an alternative narrative to the concatenation of wars, and periods between wars, that can tend to dominate the teaching of American history. I must thus credit him with giving me the prompt for the class's take-home final. (I have thought about writing a book on college teaching, calling it *Stuff I've Stolen*. If I ever do, there will be a full chapter on generous members of the PHS.)

The topic of borrowing from others brings me back, finally, to my new membership in the ACHS. I had structured the course around a set of persistent themes, such as the role of women in, and the impact of religion on, American peace movements. (Being a great fan of the music of Richard Wagner, I even called these the "leitmotifs" of the course.) On the penultimate day of class, we were discussing how these themes had played out over the course of the semester. One of my students noted that we'd studied much about Protestants, but was there a book on Catholics and the Vietnam War? I said that I wasn't aware of a book that addressed the topic specifically, but that I'd check. After some time devoted to searching for a title, I had to report to the student that I had found nothing. That was incorrect, as it turns out. But I didn't yet realize that what I had found was my next book project. I checked with my editor to see if he could recommend a press to which I might propose the project, and he responded that he would be interested in acquiring it for a new series. And so I am currently deep into research for *The Sorrowful War: American Catholics and Vietnam, 1954-1975*. The teacher always hopes that a class will change even one student's life. In a very important sense, this

one changed mine. As I said before, I am very lucky.

--Submitted by Steve Brady of the Department of History at George Washington University

Larry Gara Obituary



PICTURED: *Larry Gara is pictured at WC in 1968 and 2008. He was a valued member of the campus community for parts of six decades.*

Larry Gara, 97, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 23, 2019 at Cape May Nursing Home. He was born on May 16, 1922 in San Antonio, Texas to Helen Gara and Stanley Stutzman. He was raised by his mother and maternal grandparents in Reading, Pennsylvania. He began his college education at Kutztown State Teachers' College before earning his bachelor's degree at William Penn College in Iowa. His graduate studies focused on US History; he received a master's degree from Penn State and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin. He taught at several colleges, including Bluffton (Ohio), Mexico City, Eureka (Illinois), and Grove City (Pennsylvania), before moving to Wilmington College (WC) in 1962. His career at WC spanned several decades, and he continued teaching part time following

his retirement in 1992. He remained an active member of the WC community until only recently, as his health began to decline. From a very early age, he developed a deep love of art, birdwatching, and jazz, all of which became lifelong passions. While still in high school, he was strongly influenced by the principles of pacifism while becoming active in the Quaker Church. His convictions were strengthened over the years, and he never wavered from his principles, which emphasized nonviolence as a prerequisite for resolving all human conflicts. He spent his entire adult life devoted to making the world a more just and peaceful place for all. He will continue to live on through all of those who were influenced by his guidance and wisdom. A memorial service was held 3:00 PM, Sunday, December 22, 2019 at the Wilmington College Kelly Center McCoy Room. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any memorial gifts be made to the Peace Resource Center c/o Wilmington College, 1870 Quaker Way, Wilmington, OH 45177

Article: Wilmington College Icon Larry Gara Dies at 97

Gara Leaves Legacy of Peacemaking and Advocacy for Justice and Nonviolence
Wilmington College lost a true original with the passing of Larry Gara Saturday (Nov. 23). Dr. Gara, 97, emeritus professor of history, taught at WC from 1962 through 1992, after which he continued part time until 2002. Lenna Mae, his wife of 72 years and two children, Brian and Robin, survive him. Memorial arrangements are pending. A Quaker, he was an outspoken advocate for peace and social justice who believed — as the sign he carried during years of protests and peace vigils indicated — “War is not the answer.” Even persons whose political views might have been diametrically

opposite to Gara's respected him as one who not only talked the talk, but also walked the walk.

Gara is the author of what is considered as the definitive history of the Underground Railroad titled *The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad*. His book so impressed President John F. Kennedy that he included it in the White House's permanent library collection. Not only a teacher and researcher of history, Gara also was a part of American history. He went to federal prison for resisting the military draft during World War II and became part of a movement to racially integrate correctional institutions. In the 1950s, the court case that involved his allegedly counseling a college student not to register for the draft went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and was featured in *TIME* magazine.

Upon his arrival at Wilmington College in the early 1960s, Gara initially kept a low profile with regard to politics and protests, but the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement were such flashpoints that he became a natural point of gravitation for socially conscious students. He marched alongside students protesting the Kent State shootings as they demonstrated at the state capital. He continued exercising his right to peacefully protest instances of injustice and violence into his 90s. Implicit in his demonstrations was an insistence of nonviolence.

In addition to *The Liberty Line*, Gara's other books include *The Presidency of Franklin Pierce* and *Westernized Yankee*. He was most proud of the book he and Lenna Mae co-edited in 1999, *A Few Small Candles: War Resisters of World War II Tell Their Stories*. A subsequent symposium was held at WC featuring many of the book's contributors, an event that was covered by C-Span Network.

He had a lifelong affinity for jazz music and was an avid bird-watcher. Gara continued as an active member of the College community until only recently when his health began failing.

"One thing I always liked about Wilmington College was there were a lot of points of view on the campus, but all were friendly," Gara said in an interview for WC's *The LINK* in 2008 after the College conferred upon him an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at that year's Commencement.

"Over the years, there have been a lot of wonderful, interesting people here on campus, good friends," he added. "I found Wilmington College to be about the best place anyone could teach — it's a special place. It's been just amazing!"

Newsletter Editor



Ginger Williams is the newest PHS Newsletter Editor. She is Professor of History and Director of the Peace, Justice, and Conflict Resolution Studies Program at Winthrop University, Rock Hill, South Carolina. She is also a former President of the Peace History Society.

**Please send announcements about individual achievements (such as awards or publications), upcoming related events, or ideas for possible inclusion in the PHS Newsletter to:
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Newsletter Assistant Editor



Tiffany Owens accepted the position of PHS Newsletter Associate Editor. She is a current Graduate student at Winthrop University, Rock Hill, South Carolina. She has a bachelor's in history and is pursuing her Master's in Education. She is also a member of the Phi Alpha Theta National History Society.