

## PIER Summer Institute 2016 – Lesson Plan for Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies

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**Lesson Plan Title:** Exploring Issues of National Identity: Patriotism and Nationalism as Agents of Cohesion and Divide

**Summary:** Using the primary resource of War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, a book by Chris Hedges, war correspondent, we will study the issue of national identity as it relates to war and peace. Definitions and examples of national identity, nationalism, and patriotism will provide ideas for oral and written discourse and enable students to better understand the positive and negative nuances associated with national identity.

**Age of Students:** 18-70

**Primary Sources Accessed by Students:** War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning; United Nations Declaration of Human Rights; Patriot Act; Satyagraha of Gandhi

**Vocabulary to be Defined and Discussed:** National Identity; Nationalism; Patriotism; Nationalist Triumphalism; National Myths

**Compelling Questions of Inquiry:**

1. What are the consequences of patriotism and nationalism?
2. What roles do patriotism and nationalism play in relation to national identity?

**Lesson Plan Structure/Class Agenda:**

1. Discussion will begin with the assigned reading of Chapter 2, *The Plague of Nationalism*, in War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning.
  - a. What examples of national identity does Hedges write about? Which ones are patriotic? Nationalistic?
2. Instructor will provide **additional examples of national identity:** Israel's archeological digs to cement national identity to the exclusion and dismissal of other non-Israeli discoveries; Serbia's erasure of Muslim towns by complete destruction and decreeing that they never existed; the politics of the Patriot Act to promote the "You are with us or against us" policy of the Bush Administration; the "Take Back America" theme advanced by political figures in the United States; Gandhi's Satyagraha (Salt March) to promote non-violent struggle for

independence from Britain; the Solidarnosc Movement in Poland to forge the beginnings of an independent Poland; the struggle for freedom and national identity in Black South Africa.

**3. In class/Group work:** Students will analyze and evaluate – in groups – selections from the Patriot Act, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and the Satyagraha of Gandhi.

Questions to be considered:

- a. What do the three documents have in common?
- b. Which sections provide positive views of national identity? Negative views?
- c. What potential consequences do these documents have for the individuals acting on them?
- d. Within each document, what roles do patriotism and nationalism play in relation to national identity?

Describing the above examples, I will be using the Patriot Act, the Satyagraha of Gandhi, and the UN Declaration of Human Rights to highlight and encourage the use of primary sources by my students.

**Final Assessment:** Write a 3-5 page research paper on national identity. Select examples that we have discussed or find your own. Be sure to include at least one example of national identity that positively affects a country as well as one example that negatively affects a country.