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PHL 412.01: Just War Theory

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Philosophy 412/Just War Theory
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Fall 2011
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O.H.: tba

We begin with discussion of Iran's nuclear ambitions and threats. Given what we know about Iran can we justify intervention on moral grounds? Ideas about just war will surface as we discuss these cases. From there we begin our in-depth readings in classical just war theory. Specifically, we look at issues concerning not only just cause (morally just reasons for going to war) but also just conduct (how one conducts a war morally—including the use of weapons and tactics, treatment of civilians during war, treatment of prisoners, and enemy interrogation). In addition to discussing these classical questions we look at very contemporary issues on terrorism—what it is, if it's ever morally justified, and how terrorist targets should morally respond. We also read essays about pacifism—what it is and whether it's a consistent or practical response to aggression. Our final set of essays looks at what it might mean to assign post-war blame and at the notions of forgiveness and reconciliation toward a former belligerent after a war is over. Most of our essays are by philosophers, but we'll also read a book by Chris Hedges, a journalist who covered wars for 15 years for various news agencies, and we'll read several essays from current news magazines that examine our current involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we'll see two documentary films, "Weapons of the Spirit" (on nonviolent resistance to aggression) and "The Fog of War" (on the tactical, political, and moral rationale the Johnson administration used in conducting the Viet Nam war). I'm hoping to bring in some guest speakers, one pacifist and someone from ROTC. Since this course is so relevant to current events, PLEASE read newspapers and magazines in order to keep up with international affairs. I recommend reading at least the *Missoulian*. Reading *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* and/or the journal *Foreign Affairs* is even better!

8/29 Business and Hello.

8/31 Essays by Sapiro, p. 396 and Galston, p. 406 in *The Morality of War* (from now on MW)

9/7 "The Dangers of a Nuclear Iran," Edelman, et. al. (x); Seymor Hersch (x); we'll discuss these essays in light of Sapiro and Galston; sample presentation by me

9/12 **Jus ad Bellum (Just Cause):** "The Home Front," George Packer (x); "Soldiers' Stories: Dispatches from Iraq" (x); Aquinas in MW

9/14 Gentilli in MW

9/19 Waltzer (p. 250) in MW

9/21 Walzer continued

9/26 Lubin (p. 272) in MW

9/28 Lucas (369) in MW

10/3 “The Consequentialist: How the Arab Spring Remade Obama’s Foreign Policy,” (x); we’ll discuss this essay in light of our essays on just cause

10/5 **Doctrine of the Double Effect:** Walzer (p. 193) and Mavordes (p. 212) in MW

10/10 **Just Conduct:** Nagel (p. 222) and Brandt (p. 234) in MW;

10/12 “The Kill Company” (x), Raffi Khatchadourian; we’ll discuss this in light of essays on just conduct in particular

10/17 “The Drone Wars,” Bergen & Tiedemann (x); “The Predator War,” Mayer (x); War Machines: Recruiting Robots for Combat,” Markoff (x); discuss in light of essays on double effect and on just conduct

10/19 Prisoners and Interrogation: “The Experiment” (x), Jane Mayer; “The Secret History” (x), Jane Mayer; “Hellhole” (x), Atul Gawande

10/24-10/31 “The Fog of War,” film and discussion; *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*, Chris Hedges

11/2 “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America” (find the most recent version on-line.) Hopefully we’ll have guests from ROTC

11/7 **Pacifism:** Naverson (p. 141) and Hauerwas (p. 148) in MW

Nov. 11 Veterans Day I recommend going to a memorial in town in order to stand with vets and families who have experienced first-hand the issues we’re discussing.

11/9-11/16 “Weapons of the Spirit,” film and discussion. I’ll try to get someone from the Quaker community in to talk about nonviolent resistance and pacifism

11/21 **Terrorism:** “How al Qaeda Works,” Farrall (x); “Terrorism After the Revolution,” Byman; “The Mastermind,” McDermott; Walzer (p. 296) in MW

11/28 Valls, Boyle in MW

11/30 Lubin (p. 413) in MW

12/5-12/7 **Post-war Justice and Reconciliation:** Kiss in MW

Texts

The Morality of War, edited by May, Rovie, and Viner

War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, Chris Hedges

(x) On e-reserve on the philosophy department's web site. Go to site and then go to current course syllabi and materials. Click and look for our class under my name.

**I've put discussion questions for every reading and for the films on e-reserve as well.

Be sure to write answers to these questions as you read and to expand on them after you read. I'll collect them periodically, so they need to be legible. Always bring them to class. We'll work from them in discussion.

Requirements

*2 short papers (5-6) double-spaced pages on assigned topics: 40%

*5 2-page short-response papers on assigned topics: 25%

*1 presentation/discussion facilitation (See handout on guidelines): 10%

*Final exam: 25%

*Attendance and participation are required as this is primarily a discussion class

Law and Order

1.) Attendance and participation—I will take attendance sporadically. If attendance is good and you've participated in discussions, and if you have a borderline grade at the end of semester, I'll boost your final grade. If your attendance has been poor, I won't boost the grade. Be forewarned: Readings for this class are very difficult. If you don't come to class and take good notes, chances are good you'll fail it. So read diligently and have a conversation with what you're reading, come to class regularly, take very good notes, find a study partner or two, and see me whenever you're confused.

2.) I consider the following rude and unacceptable: ringing cell phones, open lap tops, reading the newspaper or working on something other than class materials in class, whispering to your neighbor, texting, coming into class late or leaving early (unless you've okayed this with me), in other words anything that keeps you or other students from giving me your full attention. I'll call you out for these things just once. After that, I simply drop you from the class. Please just be considerate, responsible adults, and we'll get on fine.

3.) See the University of Montana Student Conduct Code re. cheating, etc.

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