

War and Terrorism

Department of Philosophy
PHI 300, Fall, 2004,
Sperry 11.40-12.55 TR
3 Credit Hours
Instructor: Dr. Andrew Fitz-Gibbon

Course Description:

Catalog Description: "Detailed study of one philosophical problem or comparative study of two or more philosophers. May be repeated as subtitle changes. Prerequisite: 200-level course in philosophy or consent of instructor."

Since September 11, 2001 the subject of war and terrorism has dominated the media in the USA and around the world. President Bush declared a "war on terror." In this course we will examine war and terrorism from a philosophical perspective. Questions covered will include: "How has war been defined?" "What are the limits of war?" "Is there a nonviolent way to deal with terrorism?" "What makes people become terrorists?"

Required Text:

Thomas J. Badey (ed.) *Violence and Terrorism 04/05* (Guilford, CT: McGraw -Hill/Dushkin, 2004).
John Conroy *Belfast Diary: War as a Way of Life* (Boston: Beacon press, 1987, 1995).
Chris Hedges *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* (New York: Anchor Books, 2002).
Ken Lukowiak *A Soldier's Song: True Stories From the Falklands* (London: Phoenix, 1993).
John Howard Yoder *When War Is Unjust: Being Honest About Just-War Thinking* (Eugene OR, Wipf and Stock, 1996, 2001).

If you need to get in touch with the instructor:

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Office Hours: Old Main 140-C, TR 1.00-2.30

Course Requirements:

The course has a large discussion requirement, based on the required texts. Set reading and class participation are essential. Classes missed without prearrangement or a medical excuse will have negative consequences on final grade.

Each student will be required to write two 5-page take home papers, take part in a presentation in class, write a 5-page paper on the group presentation and complete a final 5-8 page take home paper (which counts as the final examination).

Final grade will be based on the following:

Class participation/attendance	10%
Class presentation	20%
5-Page paper	20%
5-Page paper	20%
5-8 Page paper, final take home	30%

Papers are due on:

Presentation paper is due on the day of your presentation

September 28 (5 page)

November 2 (5 page)

Final paper (5-8 page) due last day of class, December 7

Policies and Information:

1. SUNY Cortland is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act 1973.

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please contact the office of Disability Services located in B-40 Van Hoesen Hall or call (607) 753-2066 for an appointment. Any information regarding your disability will remain confidential. Because many accommodations require early planning, requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible. Any request for accommodations will be reviewed in a timely manner to determine their appropriateness to this setting.

2. **Absolutely no late work will be accepted unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.** Such arrangements will be made only under unusual circumstances.

3. Plagiarism. All work submitted must be your own. ideas borrowed from others, either directly, or through paraphrase, must be well-documented through end notes or footnotes. If plagiarism is suspected the student will be reported to the Provost and can either accept the charge or defend her or himself in the Grievance Tribunal.

4. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what went on in class, whether any assignments were given, and for keeping up with your work.

SUNY Cortland Conceptual Framework

The mission of teacher education at SUNY Cortland is to build upon the foundation of liberal learning in the development of teachers who have exceptional pedagogical knowledge and skills. The foundation of liberal learning informs the professional education strand in an innovative thematic approach that emphasizes personal responsibility, global understanding and social justice. Graduates of SUNY Cortland's teacher education program will be prepared to think critically, utilize technology, communicate effectively, understand and value diversity, contribute to their communities, and make a difference in the lives of their students.

The Syllabus

Discussions in class are based on the readings. **The readings are essential**

Part 1 Philosophy and War

Reading for the first three weeks covers Yoder's *When War Is Unjust*

Week One

Aug 24 General introduction and Expectations

Aug 26 What philosopher's have said about war

Week Two

Aug 31 The just war tradition: moderating warfare

Sep 2 Nonviolence as an alternative to war

Week Three

Sep 7 Ghandi and *satyagraha*

Sep 9 Discussion of Yoder

Part 2 War and Meaning

Reading for weeks 4 and 5 is Hedge's *War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*

Week Four

Sep 14 Human fascination with violence: Foucault on punishment and Girard on mimetic violence

Sep 16 Scape-goating, dehumanizing, demonizing and depersonalizing the other; Buber's "I-You" relationship, Kant's categorical imperative, Hinduism's *ahimsa* and their implications for violence

Week Five

Sep 21 Presentation #1 and Discussion of Hedges

Sep 23 Discussion of Hedges

Part 3 Case Study: The Falklands War 1982

Reading for weeks 6 and 7 is Lukowiak's *Soldier's Song*.

Week Six

Sep 28 Presentation #2 and Falklands analysis

Sep 30 Film: *The Falklands Conflict*

Week Seven

Oct 5 Film: *The Falklands Conflict* and discussion

Oct 7 Presentation #4 and War and the ordinary soldier: discussion of Lukowiak

Part 4 Defining Terrorism

Reading for weeks 8-9 is *Violence and Terrorism Parts 1-4*

Week Eight

Oct 12 Defining Terrorism

Oct 14 Presentation #5 and The development of terrorism in the twentieth century

Week Nine

Oct 19 Fall Break . . . no class

Oct 21 Presentation #6 and Terror or liberation: differing viewpoints

Part 5 Northern Ireland: The Troubles

Reading for weeks 10-11 is Conroy's *Belfast Diary*

Week Ten

Oct 26 Presentation #7 and Northern Ireland analysis

Oct 28 Film: *Bloody Sunday*

Week Eleven

Nov 2 Film: *Bloody Sunday* and discussion of Conroy

Nov 4 Discussion of Conroy

Part 6 The War on Terror

Reading for the remainder of the course is *Violence and Terrorism parts 5-14*

Week Twelve

Nov 9 Presentation #8 and The limitations and misuse of language; metaphor, declaring “war” on a concept

Nov 11 Religion and Terrorism

Week Thirteen

Nov 16 The Geneva Conventions, human rights, torture and the war on terror

Nov 18 Strategies for Combating Terrorism

Week Fourteen

Nov 24 Film: *9/11 Survivors and Afghanistan*

Nov 26 Thanksgiving no class

Week Fifteen

Nov 30 The 9/11 Commission Report: discussion

Dec 2 Summary of the course

Week Sixteen

Dec 7 Last Class