

Political Science 27/Philosophy 27
Winter 2008
Office Hours: Thursday, 3:30-5:00 pm and by apptmt

Professor Ellen Comisso
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SSB 377

ETHICS AND SOCIETY

1. Readings

A collection of readings is available at the UCSD bookstore. You are also required to obtain

William Shaw, ed. Social and Personal Ethics, 5th edition
James White, ed., Contemporary Moral Problems: War and Terrorism, 2nd edition (included with the Shaw reader)

All books and readings are on reserve at the Geisel Library. You may buy the books at the bookstore. If you purchase them on-line, be sure to get the correct editions, since some of the assigned readings are not in earlier or later editions. You may also be able to obtain the books and the reader from students who have taken this course with Professor Comisso in the winter or summer of 2007.

2. Lectures and Sections

There will be two hours of lecture each week: Monday and Wednesday, 3-3:50 pm in Solis 107. You are responsible for knowing the material presented at lectures, and you are required to attend a discussion section.

On sections: Discussing and debating the topics we will consider is an essential part of the course. Thus, **attendance at sections is required**. To encourage you to come prepared and to keep up with the reading, you may be given occasional short quizzes in section. Attendance will be taken; participation and preparation are factored into the final grade. Please note that **3 unexcused absences result in the final grade dropping by one letter**.

3. Requirements and Evaluation

You are required to write two short papers (about 6 pp. each) and take a final exam. Topics will be handed out in class one week before the due date, and they will also be posted on the web page. The first paper will be due on Friday, February 1; the second paper will be due Monday, February 25. Both papers must be handed in through *Turnitin.com*. In calculating your course grade, the first paper will be worth 20%, the second paper 30%, and the final exam will be worth 40%. Section participation and quizzes (if there are any) will be worth 10%.

4. Office hours

Professor Comisso's office is in the Social Science Building, Room 377. Office hours are Thursday, from 3:30-5:00 pm or by appointment (534-3180). Professor Comisso enjoys meeting with students and encourages you to arrange to see her. She can also be reached by email: ecomisso@ucsd.edu. TAs will announce their office hours in section.

And in addition: Check out the Ethics and Society web page, with lots of links to hot topics, a direct line to your TA, assignments and tips, and featuring The Virtual Section! Post your thoughts...and see who responds!

The address is: <http://weber.ucsd.edu/~ecomisso/Ethics&Society.html>

READING ASSIGNMENTS
(unless specified, reading is in the packet)

I. Introduction: Moral Judgments and Normative Ethics (January 7-14)

John-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is Humanism"
*Stanley Fish, "Condemnation without Absolutes" (on E&S web page)

Immanuel Kant, "Good Will, Duty, and the Categorical Imperative," SPE, pp. 53-61
John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," SPE, pp. 61-70)

II. Personhood and the Right to Life: The Abortion Controversy (January 16-28)

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (SPE, pp. 128-39)
John Noonan, "An Almost Absolute Value in History" (SPE, pp. 105-10)
Sidney Callahan, "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda"
L. W. Sumner, "Abortion: A Moderate View"
*Roger Werthheimer, "Understanding the Abortion Argument" (on e-reserve and E&S web page)
Michael Tooley, "Abortion and Infanticide"

[Paper #1 will cover lectures and reading from January 7-28. **Due date is Friday, February 1.**]

III. Ethics and (Political) Violence (January 30-February 22)

A. Just War: When to Fight

William O'Brien, "The Conditions of Just War and Limited War" in White, Contemporary Moral Problems: War and Terrorism (W&T, pp. 21-34)

Case: Iraq: a timeline of key events from 1921-2006 is available on the class web page for the sake of background.

President Bush, September 2002 speech to the United Nations OR

Oct. 2002 speech in Cincinnati OH (explaining his request to Congress for a resolution authorizing the use of force in Iraq)

Richard Falk, "Opposition to War Against Iraq"

*Optional reading—op ed pieces by Thomas Friedman, Colin Powell, and J. Mearsheimer and S. Walt—you may find interesting is on the web page.

B. Just War: How to Fight

--Strategic bombing/atomic weapons

O'Brien, "Just War" (above)

Elizabeth Anscombe, "War and Murder"

Henry Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb"

Colin Dueck, "Alternatives to the Bomb"

-- Torture

Mark Bowden, "The Dark Art of Interrogation," SPE pp. 382-91

"Torture at Abu Ghraib," W&T, pp. 74-6

The Battle of Algiers (film, showtime to be announced))

The Economist, "Ends, means and barbarity" and

"How to Lose Friends and Alienate People"

C. Terrorism

Michael Ignatieff, "Human Rights, the Laws of War and Terrorism," SPE, pp. 374-82
Haig Khachadourian, "'The Morality of Terrorism'" (W&T, pp. 34-47)
Laurie Calhoun, "The Terrorist's Tacit Message" (W&T, pp. 47-54)
Nelson Mandela, "The Rivonia Trial" (optional)
*Osama bin Laden's Warning: full text, Oct. 7, 2001 (E&S web page)
The Battle of Algiers (see above)

[Paper # 2 will cover material from Jan. 30-Feb. 22; due date is Monday, February 25]

IV. Business and Professional Ethics (February 25-March 3)

Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits"
Robert Almeder, "Morality in the Marketplace"
Ian Davis, "The Biggest Contract"

Cases: Video: *Running with the Bulls*

"Cost Benefit Analysis and the Ford Pinto"
Joseph Nocera, "Enough Shame to Go Around On China"
Thomas Carson, "The Ethics of Sales," SPE, pp. 496-505 (optional)

Simone Sandy, "Tossing Dwarfs in Illinois"
Ian Maitland, "In Defense of International Sweatshops," SPE, pp. 448-57

"Organizational Decision-Making at Aero Products"
Michael Davis, "Some Paradoxes of Whistleblowing", SPE, pp. 505-14
(optional)

John Ladd, "Morality and the Ideal of Rationality in Formal Organizations"

V. Justice and Fairness: Preferential Treatment (March 5-10)

Richard Wasserstrom, "One Way to Understand and Defend Programs of Preferential Treatment,"
SPE, pp, 399-406
Thomas Sowell, "Affirmative Action: A Worldwide Disaster" (on e reserve and E&S web page)
James Rachels, "What People Deserve"
Cases: US Supreme Court, "University of Michigan Affirmative Action Cases, SPE, pp.423-31
Robert Fullinwider, "Affirmative Action at AT&T"
Pamela Varley, "Affirmative Action in Pasadena"

VI. Ethics and Ultimate Values (March 13)

John Arthur, "Does Morality Depend on Religion?"
John Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is Humanism" (above)
Franz Kafka, "In the Cathedral" and "The Problem with our Laws"