

## 840:347 War, Peace, and Violence in Western Religious Thought

### Fall Semester 2010: The Just War, Holy War, and Jihad Ideas

James T. Johnson

Department of Religion, Loree 102, DC

phone 932-9637; e-mail [jtj@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:jtj@rci.rutgers.edu)

Office hours: Thursday 9:00-12:00 or by appointment

### COURSE OVERVIEW

All the major world religions have produced traditions of right and wrong to address the moral issues of war and peace. These traditions seek to answer such questions as whether resort to armed conflict is ever justified, and if so for what reasons (the question of justification); who has the right to initiate use of armed force and who does not (the question of authority); what means may be used and who may be targeted by such force (the question of right conduct); and the relation of a community's use of armed force to the goal of peace among communities. In the western religions, the normative influences of Judaism and Christianity are to be found in the development and application of just war tradition, while the corresponding normative tradition for Islamic thought centers on the idea of the jihad of the sword and its place in the governance and conduct of the ideal Muslim community. This course begins with an overview and examination of the relation among religion, government of the political community, and the conception of international relations bearing on the traditions of just war and *jihad of the sword* (Part I), follows with a comparison of the relation of religion to war in the western and Islamic normative traditions (Part II), and concludes by examining American religious debate in recent decades focused on moral issues raised in connection with contemporary armed conflict (Part III). Particular attention will be paid throughout to the way the traditions studied deal with the values of peace, justice, and protection of the innocent.

At the end of each of the first two parts what I call a "directed paper" of 5-6 pages (approximately 1250-1500 words) will be assigned (you may think of it as a take-home test). For Part III you are asked to write a brief (6-8 pages, approximately 1500-2000 words) paper on the problem of terrorism and responding morally to it. This paper is to be a critical reflection on either the book by Jean Bethke Elshtain or that by Michael Ignatieff below, with particular attention to the implications of the author's arguments for the questions of military intervention, genocide, noncombatant immunity, and torture. This paper is due at the time the final exam is scheduled.

All SAS faculty have been asked to remind their students of the University's policy on academic integrity. These papers are to be your own work, based on the readings assigned for the course and on class lectures and discussions. There are serious sanctions for cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. The full policy on academic integrity is available at <http://TeachX.rutgers.edu/integrity/index.html>.

You are asked to buy the following books, which are on order at the University Bookstore in Ferren Mall:

James Turner Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions*  
and *Morality and Contemporary Warfare*  
John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam*

You should also buy the Coursepak for this course, which contains other assigned readings.

In addition, you should buy at least one of the following books:

Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror*  
Michael Ignatieff, *The Lesser Evil*

## **DAY-BY-DAY PLAN OF THE COURSE**

9/2: First day of classes. Introduction and Overview

### **PART I. THE IDEAS OF JUST WAR AND JIHAD OF THE SWORD; THEIR CONCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

9/7-9: The Just War Idea: Origins and Historical Development, Thematic Issues, Contemporary Uses

Readings: Johnson, *Morality and Contemporary Warfare* (MCW below), chaps. 1-2.  
Ramsey, *The Just War* (TJW below), chaps. 6-7 (Coursepak)  
Johnson, chap. 1 in Abrams, ed., *Close Calls* (CC below) (coursepak)  
Rostow, chap. 2 in CC (Coursepak)

9/14: The Ideal of Peace in Christian Pacifism and Just War Thought

Readings: Weigel, *Tranquillitas Ordinis*, 26-32  
Johnson, *The Quest for Peace*, 127-132  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace* (CP below), Introduction  
All these readings are in the Coursepak.

9/16-21: Origins and Early Development of the Islamic Community and of *Shari`a* Reasoning

Readings: 9/16: Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (AJWI below), chap. 1  
9/18: Kelsay, AJWI, chap. 2

9/23-28: Historical and Thematic Development of the Idea of *Jihad* of the Sword

Readings: Donner, chap. 2 in *Just War and Jihad* (JWJ below) (Coursepak)  
Sachedina, chap. 2 in Johnson and Kelsay, *Cross, Crescent, and Sword* (CCS below) (Coursepak)  
Kelsay, AJWI, chap. 3

*First directed paper assigned 9/28, due 10/5.*

9/30: Transition—Thinking Comparatively Across Cultural Traditions: Commonalities and Differences, the Importance of Context

No new readings; review and think about those above

### **PART II. JUST WAR AND JIHAD: A COMPARISON ON MAJOR THEMES**

10/5-7: The Question of Justification for Resort to War

Readings: Johnson, *The Holy War Idea* (HWI below), chap. 3  
Little, chap. 5 in JWJ (Coursepak)  
Kelsay, AJWI, chap. 4

10/12-14: The Question of Authority for Resort to War

Readings: Johnson, HWI, chap. 4  
Kelsay, AJWI, chap. 5  
Lawrence, chap. 6 in JWJ (Coursepak)  
*The Neglected Duty*, selections (Coursepak)

10/19-21: The Question of Right Conduct in War

Readings: Johnson, HWI, chap. 5; MCW, chap. 4  
Kelsay, AJWI, chap. 6

10/26-28: Religion and the Justification of War in the Service of Statecraft

Readings: Johnson, MCW, chap. 5, HWI, chap. 6.  
Ramsey, TJW, chap. 1 (Coursepak)

*Second directed paper assigned 10/28, due 11/4.*

*No class 11/2 (American Academy of Religion annual meeting)*

### **PART III. RECENT AMERICAN RELIGIOUS DEBATE ON MORAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY ARMED CONFLICT**

11/4-9 The Nuclear Weapons Debate: Framing the Issues for Later Arguments

Readings: Ramsey, TJW, chap 11 (Coursepak)  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, CP, Summary and Parts I-II (Coursepak)

11/11-16: Religion and the Gulf War Debate

Readings: Johnson and Weigel, *Just War and the Gulf War*, Parts III, II, and I (read in this order, please) (Coursepak)  
Recommended: Oberhaus, "Did the Coalition Air Attack on Withdrawing Iraqi Forces Constitute Permissible 'Just War' Conduct?" (Coursepak)

11/18: Military Intervention: Moral Perspectives

Readings: Langan, chap. 5 in CC (Coursepak)  
Christiansen and Powers, chap. 9 in CC (Coursepak)  
Johnson, MCW, chap. 3

11/23: The Problem of Genocide: The Case of Srebrenica

Readings: Johnson, MCW, chap. 4  
Jan Willem Honig and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record Of a War Crime*, chaps. 1, 3 (Coursepak)

*No class 11/25: Thanksgiving break.*

11/30: Terrorism and Low-Intensity Conflict

Readings: Abrams, ed., CC, chaps. 11-13 (Coursepak)  
Elshtain or Ignatieff as per your choice

12/2: Justifying the War To Remove Saddam Hussein

Readings: AIn Bush=s Words@: transcript of President Bush=s address to the UN 9/12/02  
ALand=s Letter to Bush on >Just War=@ 10/3/02  
US Conference of Catholic Bishops, AStatement on Iraq@ 11/3/02  
AWar in Iraq: Is It Just?@ *Center Conversations* May 2003  
All in Coursepak.

12/7: "Religion and Torture in an Age of Terrorism": a symposium

Reading: *Faith & International Affairs*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Summer 2007)

12/9: After War Is Over

Reading: Johnson, MCW, chap. 6

*Last class day for this course.*

*Final papers are due no later than the period of the final exam for this course as in the Schedule of Classes—Monday, December 20, between 12:00 noon and 3:00 PM. Directions will be distributed with the assignment.*