

Political Science 27/Philosophy 27

Winter 2007

Professor Ellen Comisso ecomisso@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 3:30-5:00 pm and by appointment, SSB 377

ETHICS AND SOCIETY

1. Readings

--William Shaw, ed. Social and Personal Ethics, 5th edition; and

--James White, ed., Contemporary Moral Problems: War and Terrorism, 2nd edition (included with the Shaw reader)

--A packet of readings for "Ethics and Society" (pretty nice cover, huh?)

All are on sale at the bookstore.; if the packet is sold out, go to the Textbook Information desk to place a special order. All books and readings are also on (physical) reserve at the Geisel Library. Some of the packet readings will be on ereserves. In addition, some required readings not in the packet will be posted on the class web page. (see below).

2. Lectures and Sections

There will be two hours of lecture each week, on Monday and Wednesday (10:00-10:50 am), in York Hall 2722. You are responsible for knowing the material presented at lectures, and you are required to attend the section in which you are enrolled.

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 prevent you from falling behind in the reading, you may be given occasional short quizzes dealing with the required reading. Attendance will be taken in section; participation and preparation are factored into the final grade. Please note that 3 unexcused absences result in the final grade dropping by one full letter.

3. Requirements and Evaluation

You will be 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 Monday, February 5; the second paper will be due Wednesday, February 21. 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%.

You are also required to attend a showing of the film, *Battle of Algiers* on Tuesday, Feb. 13; time (evening), and room (someplace on the Warren campus) to be announced in class. Refreshments will be provided. And for free, too.

4. Office hours

Professor Comisso's office is in the Social Science Building, Room 377. Office hours are Wednesday, 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

5. Class web page <http://weber.ucsd.edu/~ecomisso/Ethics&Society.html>.

Some required reading too expensive to reprint in the packet will be posted there, as will optional items of interest and even some assignments not (yet) on the syllabus. Assignments, occasional lecture notes, and announcements will also be there, so you should check in at least once a week. Last but not least, check out the **virtual section**—you can discuss issues raised in class along with anything else that comes to mind.

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

I. Introduction: Moral relativism and Moral Judgments (January 8-17)

James Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" in Shaw, Social and Personal Ethics (SPE), pp. 35-46

Mary Midgley, "Trying Out One's New Sword"
John-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is Humanism"
Stanley Fish, "Condemnation without Absolutes"

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 17-29)

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (SPE, pp. 110-9)
John Noonan, "An Almost Absolute Value in History" (SPE, pp. 128-139)
Sidney Callahan, "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda"
L. W. Sumner, "Abortion: A Moderate View"
Roger Wertheimer, "Understanding the Abortion Argument" (on e-reserve and on Ethics and Society web page)
Michael Tooley, "Abortion and Infanticide"

[Paper #1 will cover lectures and reading from January 8-29. Due date is Monday, February 5]

III. Ethics and (Political) Violence (January 31-February 21)

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: W&T, pp.72-4; a timeline of key events from 1921-2006 is available on the class web page for the sake of background.

President Bush, Text of September 2002ch to the United Nations OR
Text of 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"

Thomas Friedman, "A War for Oil?" *NY Times*, Jan. 5, 2003

"Thinking about Iraq I" *NYT*, Jan. 22, 2003

"Thinking about Iraq II" *NYT*, Jan. 26, 2003

*J. Mearsheimer and S. Walt, "Keeping Saddam Hussein in a Box" *NYT*, 2/2/03

*Colin Powell, "We will not shrink from war," *Wall St. Journal*, Feb. 3, 2003

(* both on E&S 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, to be shown Feb. 13)
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"
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 Feb. 1-Feb. 19. Due date is February 21.]

IV. Business and Professional Ethics (Feb. 21-March 5)

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 5-12)

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 14)

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"