

Political Science 27/Philosophy 27
Fall 2001
Professor Ellen Comisso ecomisso@weber.ucsd.edu
Social Science building, Room 377
Office Hours: TW 330-4:30 pm and by appointment

ETHICS AND SOCIETY

1. Readings

A collection of readings is available at Postal Plus Copy Shop, located at 4130 La Jolla Village Drive (next to the Marriott Hotel). Postal Plus has also agreed to sell the packet outside of the lecture hall. In addition, two books are required for this course and may be purchased at the University bookstore in the Price Center. They are:

Dennis Thompson and Amy Gutman, eds. Ethics and Politics
Sissela Bok, Lying

All books and readings are on reserve at the Geisel Library.

2. Lectures and Sections

There will be two hours of lecture each week, on Monday and Wednesday (10:10-11:00 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, at the discretion of the TA. 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 average dropping by one 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, October 15; the second paper will be due Monday, November 5. 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%. Students taking the course on a P/NP basis must achieve a grade of C- or higher on each paper and the final exam in order to pass the course.

4. Office hours

Professor Comisso's office is in the Social Science Building, Room 377. Office hours are Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 3:30-4:30 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@weber.ucsd.edu

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 otherwise noted, readings are in the packet

I. Introduction: Moral judgments and moral responsibility (Sept. 24-October 1)

B. F. Skinner, Walden Two, Chaps. 3, 10-17 (optional, skim), 20, 23, 27, 29, 32-4
John-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is Humanism"
"The Passing of a Hero"

II. Personhood and the Right to Life: The Abortion Controversy (October 3-10)

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"
John Noonan, "How to Argue about Abortion" or "An Almost Absolute Value in History"
Sidney Callahan, "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda"
L. W. Sumner, "Abortion: A Moderate View"
Roger Werthheimer, "Understanding the Abortion Argument"
Michael Tooley, "Abortion and Infanticide"
Joseph Califano, "Administering Abortion Policy," in Thompson and Gutman, Ethics and Politics (E&P), pp. 337-65
Pamela Varley, "Defunding Organ Transplants in Arizona," E&P, pp. 239-55

[Paper #1 will cover lectures and reading from Sept. 25-October 11 Due date is Monday, October 15]

III. Ethics and Politics: An Oxymoron?

A. War (October 15-22)

Douglas Lackey, "Just War Theory I: When to Fight"
"Just War Theory II: How to Fight"
Elizabeth Anscombe, "War and Murder"

Cases:

- War
- a) War in Yugoslavia (all reading in packet)
--Background: Los Angeles Times, "A Primer on the Conflict" and "Timeline of Events"
NATO, "NATO's role in relation to the conflict in Kosovo"
--Views: President Clinton, "Statement by the President on Kosovo" (3/24/99)
"A Just and Necessary War" (5/23/99)
Steven Shalom, "A Just War?"
Richard Falk, "Reflections on the War"
Henry Kissinger, "New World Disorder" (optional)
- b) Dropping atomic bombs on Japan (all reading in E&P, pp. 5-26)
Henry Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb"
Colin Dueck, "Alternatives to the Bomb"

B. Lying: Private v. Public Morality (Oct. 24-31)

Sissela Bok, Lying, Chaps. 3-8. 10. 12

Cases: Christine Huang, "Disinformation for Qaddafi"

David Nacht, "The Iran-Contra Affair" (both in E&P, pp. 54-67)

Jasmine Quesada, "The Clinton Dilemma: When Ethics Becomes Political"
(packet and on web page)

"The Starr Report" (optional, link is on web page, X-rated)

]Paper # 2 will cover material from October 16-30. Due date is November 5.]

IV. Business and Professional Ethics (Nov. 5-14)

Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits"

ROBERT ALMEDER, "MORALITY IN THE MARKETPLACE"

John Luckhardt, "Duties of Agents to Principals"

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

Cases: Video: "Running with the Bulls"

"Cost Benefit Analysis and the Ford Pinto"

Simone Sandy, "Tossing Dwarfs in Illinois," *E&P*, pp. 323-6

"Organizational Decision-Making at Aero Products"

Tom Beauchamp and Martha Elliott, "Hooker Chemical and Love Canal"

OR Nicholas Carter, "Pressure to Launch: The Tragedy of the Space Shuttle Challenger," *E&P*, pp. 117-28 (NB: For those of you who never actually saw what happened, you can find a video on

<http://history.nasa.gov/sts511.html> . It was a pretty spectacular disaster, BTW.)

Video: "Running with the Bulls"

V. Justice and Fairness: Preferential Treatment (Nov. 19-26)

Thomas Nagel, "Introduction"

Richard Wasserstrom, "One Way to Understand and Defend Programs of Preferential Treatment"

Robert Simon, "Preferential Hiring: A Reply to Judith Jarvis Thomson"

Thomas Sowell, "Affirmative Action: A Worldwide Disaster"

James Rachels "What People Deserve"

Cases: Regents of the University of California v. Bakke

Robert Fullinwider, "Affirmative Action at AT&T," *E&P*, pp. 211-18

Pamela Varley, "Affirmative Action in Pasadena," *E&P*, pp. 219-30

VI. Ethics and Ultimate Values (November 28)

John Arthur, "Does Morality Depend on Religion?"

John Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is Humanism"

Franz Kafka, "In the Cathedral" and "The Problem with our Law"