**First Paper Assignment**

In a well organized, fully documented, and analytical essay of 2-3 double-spaced pages, please analyze some aspect of a particular violent conflict from the *Just War perspective*. You may analyze the resort to violence in *jus ad bellum* terms (justice of the resort to war), or you may analyze a particular incident within a conflict in *jus in bellum* terms (justice of actions taken within a war).

You are expected to choose from one to three aspects or actions of the conflict and critically discuss arguments both for and against the action taken in that instance. Please be sure to keep a narrow focus so that your analysis can be thorough in 2-3 pages!

You are expected to refrain from setting up a straw-man Just War argument (see below). While you are encouraged to use arguments from a Pacifist and/or Crusader perspective to critique a Just War position don’t forget that it’s both possible and essential to critique a Just War argument from within a Just War viewpoint! For some possible scenarios, see the list below. *A certain amount of historical knowledge must inform your essay; hence some of the suggestions are from very recent history.*

It is recommended that you draw upon the class discussions, *Romero* film, current events, assigned readings and your more general knowledge to substantiate your argument. All sources must be referenced.

I suggest that you begin with an analytical outline. This would include the following elements:

- **Thesis** (that answers the question above)
- **Bridge** (that introduces key concepts and aspects of our historical, political, and social context)
- **Examples** (each section presenting a thesis statement, further context, and support whether from the CSM or other materials/stories/discussions from class)
- **Restatement** (explaining what you’ve learned from this exercise, as well as new questions that this assignment has provoked in your own thinking and experience of current events)

A solid essay will present at least two perspectives: one, that which you presently hold; two, that of someone whom you imagine to be living quite differently than you; and perhaps others that represent the complexity of relationships out there in the world. A “perspective” is much more than a mere opinion. It is an argumentative position based on your feelings, experience, our readings, current events, and the numerous life stories that we have heard or observed so far. There are lots of names and faces that we can meaningfully attach to our Christian ethical and globalization considerations.

You should not set up a straw man to be knocked down, but genuinely inhabit and argue honestly for at least one point of view (POV) other than your own. You are welcome to then refute that point of view—if you were unable to refute it, it would probably not be the “other” POV, after all—during the course of presenting your own conclusions on the topic.

If you find that your essay is too short, try giving more examples or making your arguments more thorough. If you find that your essay is too long, sharpen the focus!
You are seniors. I expect senior-level work. Proofread your essay. Have a coursemate read and critique it. You must, of course, follow standard bibliographic and reference format. See the Chicago Manual of Style, which was introduced in your 1st Year Seminar class, and is always for sale at the bookstore.*

For the essay rubric, see http://www.bluffton.edu/~bergerd/classes/LAS400/rubric.html. See also my hints for writing Capstone essays at http://www.bluffton.edu/~bergerd/classes/LAS400/essayHints.html.

As with any written assignment, feel free to work with the Writing Center staff, or call upon me during office hours, or engage one another in preparation—up to the point when you begin writing. Your classmates may, indeed, offer the best and most helpful feedback. Good luck—some great essays come out of CVGC.

**The legal boilerplate**

This essay is due by 8:30 AM on Sunday, February 1, by e-mail to bergerd@bluffton.edu, in Microsoft Word format. Paper copies will not be accepted, but you may submit your essay on a floppy disk or CD as an alternative to E-mail. This counts for 5% of your final grade. Late papers will lose one point (of 20) per calendar day, unless I have granted an extension prior to the due date. Copies turned in on disk must be in my hands (not just my mailbox) by Sunday, 1 February or they will be considered late.

**Suggested conflict scenarios**

Below, I suggest some topics, with possible discussion questions, that might suitable for a 2- to 3-page essay. You need not confine yourself to one of the topics below, nor to my possible questions.

- The civil war in El Salvador: was armed resistance necessary? A comparison to the non-violent and violent wings of the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s might be in order; compare Martin Luther King, Jr. (“I have a dream”) with Malcolm X (“By any means necessary”).
- The failure of UN troops on the ground to intervene in the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Discuss their orders with respect to rules of engagement, and whether they would have been justified in violating those orders.
  - A Google search http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=rwanda+genocide
  - Book reviews at the WWW World History Hub may be helpful:
    - http://www.worldhistoryhub.com/We_Wish_to_Inform_You_That_Tomorrow_We_Will_be_Killed_With_Our_Families_Stories_from_Rwanda_0312243359.html

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* Any standard bibliographic and reference format is acceptable, so long as it is complete.
➢ US intervention in Haiti, 1994, to install Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Two possible aspects: was it just to intervene? Was the result just? If not, was it because of culpable negligence (poor planning), unintended consequences, or simply unforeseeable bad luck?


➢ NATO intervention in the Balkans. Possible topics: Was intervention just? Was it needed? What were the consequences?

♦ CalTech’s comprehensive Bosnia website http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~bosnia/ would be extremely useful.

➢ Philadelphia police attack on MOVE headquarters, May 13, 1985. Was the operation just? Examine whether the fact that it went so wrong was due to negligence or bad luck.

♦ http://www.mindfully.org/Reform/MOVE-Phihadelphia-BombNYT14may85.htm reprints contemporary news accounts from the New York Times

♦ A Google search http://www.google.com/search?q=philadelphia+MOVE+police

➢ The American Civil War. The whole war is much too broad, though an essay exploring the justice of the resort to war for either the North or the South might be in order if the contemporary political situation is thoroughly considered. The suggested examples below are nearly identical topics.

♦ William Tecumseh Sherman’s “March to the Sea” of 1864. Address jus in bellum aspects.

  ▪ A Google search http://www.google.com/search?q=sherman+%22march+to+the+sea%22 turns up lots of good references

♦ Philip Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign, in which he was instructed to make certain that “a crow flying across [the valley] will have to carry his own provender for the remainder of the season.” Address jus in bellum aspects.

  ▪ http://www.ehistory.com/uscw/features/battles/campaigns/east/0020.cfm