

THEO 20659 / HESB 30280

Christian Perspectives on War, Peace, and Revolution

Fall 2013 | Dept. of Theology, University of Notre Dame

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor:	Brian Hamilton	Section 1:	MWF 2:00–2:50pm
Email:	bhamilt1@nd.edu		O'Shaughnessy 117
Office:	Malloy 348	Section 2:	MWF 3:30–4:20pm
Office Hours:	Thursdays, 12-3pm <i>Or by appointment.</i>		Haggar B016

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Christian beliefs ought to make a difference in the way we think about the use of violence, but it's difficult to understand exactly how—and Christians over time have disagreed about which beliefs are the most relevant. This course will build on the “foundations” provided in your first theology course by tracing the development of Christian perspectives on war, peace, and revolution from the New Testament to the present day. During the first half of the semester, we will explore how Christian perspectives on violence changed as Christianity went from a persecuted minority to a bearer of imperial power over the course of the first millennium. During the second half of the semester, we will run from the Middle Ages to the 20th century three times: first to discuss the growth of just war theory, second to discuss the evolution of peace concern, and third to discuss the tradition of Christian revolutionary violence. The class is divided overall into six short segments, each of which will be focused on a question arising from our source material. You will write a short position paper at the end of each segment, which will become the basis for a class discussion.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- evaluate and debate particular acts of violence or the refusal of violence within a theological frame, i.e., with reference to the way it embodies or fails to embody a Christian perspective on the world;
- invoke historical examples that bear on contemporary debates about violence;
- summarize the development of Christian thinking on violence through history, making judgments about points of continuity and discontinuity within the tradition;
- distill the theological assumptions from an argument about the use of violence, even if those assumptions aren't made explicit.

REQUIRED TEXTS

You are required to buy only one book: Lisa Sowle Cahill's *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory* (ISBN 978-0800627003). All other course readings will be available on Sakai. I expect you to print out the relevant materials at the beginning of each segment of the course, and bring those texts to class every day.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading journal

20%

You will keep a reading journal on Sakai, making entries for each day's reading assignments based on a prompt I give you. The entries will always be short, and shouldn't take you more than 15 minutes to complete. They're meant to help you synthesize the material you read, set the stage for class discussion, and prepare you to write your positions papers. Your entry needs to be posted by noon each day of class. I will grade each entry on a simple check, check-minus, zero scale.

Position papers

60%

You will write six brief position papers over the duration of the semester, on a question I will give you at the beginning of each segment of the course. These papers are really the heart of the class. The question will pull together the material we have worked on in that segment, and immerse you in live scholarly debates about the history of Christian thinking about violence. We will spend the last day of each segment, after you've written your paper, discussing and debating your arguments in class. Each paper will be no more than five hundred words long, or roughly one single-spaced page. Condensing your argument into such a small space will not be easy, but you'll get better at it as the semester progresses. Each paper will therefore be worth a progressively larger portion of your final grade: the first two papers will be worth 5%, the second two 10%, and the last two 15%.

Final Exam

20%

There one be one, formal exam at the end of the course. It will include a series of basic recall questions, retracing some of the ground we've covered, and two essay questions asking you to think more constructively and normatively about a Christian view of violence in our own context. I will make a study guide available.

Attendance and participation

Discussion is absolutely central to this course, so your regular attendance is required. Each student is allowed two free skips during the semester. Your third unexcused absence will result in a 2% reduction of your final grade, and every subsequent unexcused absence in a 5% reduction. I expect you to arrive on time. Participation is not a formal part of your grade, but will be considered when considering border-line final marks.

FINE PRINT

Overdue Assignments

I will accept late writing assignments, since part of the goal is simply to provide you an opportunity to synthesize the material we've dealt with in class. But since the other part of the goal is prepare you for class discussion, it will be impossible to receive full marks for a late assignment. Late journal entries will not be able to achieve more than a check-minus, and late position papers will start from a maximum possible grade of an 85%. I will grant exceptions for personal emergencies, or for students who speak to me at least one week *prior* to the due date about an expected late assignment.

Inclusive Language

In keeping with the policy of the Department of Theology, you should always use inclusive language when talking about human beings—e.g., “people” instead of “men,” “he or she” instead of just “he,” “brothers and sisters” instead of just “brothers,” and so on. When talking about God, you are free to use whatever images or pronouns you prefer. During class discussions, always strive to be aware of how your choice of language will come across to your classmates, who may be in a different situation, have different commitments, or stand in different relations to the material than you do.

Academic Integrity

All students should familiarize themselves with the Honor Code on the University's website and pledge to observe its tenets in all written and oral work. The work you do in this class must be your own. If I allow collaboration, you must fairly attribute your fellow students' contribution to your project.

Disability

Students with disabilities or medical situations needing special accommodation should speak with me about it early in the course. We will work out an arrangement in conversation with Disability Services or your medical professional.

Personal Electronics

You are free to use laptops during class, but cell phones and tablets are not permitted without my prior permission. If I find you using any of these for things unrelated to the course, I reserve the right to revoke your privileges.

Grading Scale

A (94–100%) – Exceeds all expectations	B- (80–83%) – Usually solid work
A- (90–93%) – Superior work throughout	C+ (78–79%) – Meets all basic standards
B+ (88–89%) – Usually superior work	C (74–77%) – Meets most basic standards
B (84–87%) – Solid work throughout	C- (70–73%) – Falls short of some standards

SCHEDULE

- Wed. / Aug. 28: Introductions
 Fri. / Aug. 30: Theology and violence
Reading: Cahill, pp. 1–8, 13–14 (on pacifism and just war).

I. The earliest Christians

- Mon. / Sept. 2: Jesus and violence
Read: Course pack [CP] 1.1 (Selections from the New Testament). Cahill, pp. 26–38 (on the Sermon on the Mount).
- Wed. / Sept. 4: The earliest Christians
Reading: CP 1.2 (New Testament, Didache).
- Fri. / Sept. 6: Addressing the Roman Empire
Reading: CP 1.3 (Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen).
- Mon. / Sept. 9: Patience and the law of peace
Reading: CP 1.4 (Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Canons of Hippolytus). Cahill, pp. 47–48, 52–54 (on Tertullian and Origen).
- Wed. / Sept. 11: Martyrdom and the military
Reading: CP 1.5 (Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Acts of the Military Martyrs). Kalantzis on Martyrdom.
- Fri. / Sept. 13: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

II. Constantine and after

- Mon. / Sept. 16: The conversion of Constantine the Great
Reading: CP 2.1 (Eusebius, Constantine). Cahill, 55 (on the Constantinian shift).
- Wed. / Sept. 18: Attitudes to empire: Eusebius and Ambrose
Reading: CP 2.2 (Eusebius, Ambrose).
- Fri. / Sept. 20: The birth of just war theory: Ambrose
Reading: CP 2.3 (Ambrose). Cahill, 59–60 (on Ambrose). Swift on Ambrose.
- Mon. / Sept. 23: The birth of just war theory: Augustine
Reading: CP 2.4 (Augustine). Recommended: Cahill, 56-57, 61-66, 69–75, 78-80 (on Augustine).

Wed. / Sept. 25: Heresy and coercion
Reading: CP 2.5 (Constantine, Augustine).

Fri. / Sept. 27: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

III. The Crusades

Mon. / Sept. 30: The opening of the Crusades
Reading: CP 3.1 (Gregory VII, Urban II, Ekkehard of Aurach, Fulk of Chartres). Cahill, 126–35 (on the First Crusade). Recommended: Cahill, 119–26 (on the idea of “holy war”).

Wed. / Oct. 2: The new knighthood
Reading: CP 3.2 (Bernard of Clairvaux, Catherine of Siena).

Fri. / Oct. 4: Crusade against heretics
Reading: CP 3.3 (Lucius III, Frederick II, *Schwabenspiegel*, Joan of Arc). Cahill, 135–39 (on Joan of Arc).

Mon. / Oct. 7: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

IV. The growth of just war theory

Wed. / Oct. 9: Medieval development of just war theory
Reading: CP 4.1 (Rufinus, Thomas Aquinas). Recommended: Cahill, ch. 5 (on Aquinas).

Fri. / Oct. 11: Reformation development of just war theory
Reading: CP 4.2 (Martin Luther, John Calvin). Recommended: Cahill, ch. 6 (on Luther and Calvin).

Mon. / Oct. 14: The problems of modern warfare
Reading: CP 4.3 (Vatican II, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Helmut Gollwitzer).

Wed. / Oct. 16: Catholic just war doctrine in the twentieth century
Reading: CP 4.4 (John Paul II, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace). Recommended: Cahill, 206–13 (on Catholic just war theory).

Fri. / Oct. 18: A new problem: *ius post bellum*
Reading: CP 4.5 (Tobias Winright and Mark Allman).

— FALL BREAK: OCTOBER 19–27 —

Mon. / Oct. 28: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

V. Christian anti-violence organizing

- Wed. / Oct. 30: Medieval peace concern
Reading: CP 5.1 (Statements on the Peace of God).
- Fri. / Nov. 1: Two types of sixteenth-century peace advocacy
Reading: CP 5.2 (Michael Sattler, Erasmus). Recommended Cahill, pp. 149–60, 175–77 (on Erasmus and the Anabaptist).
- Mon. / Nov. 4: Mennonites in the twentieth century
Reading: CP 5.3 (John Howard Yoder, J. Denny Weaver). Recommended: Cahill, pp. 223–26 (on Yoder).
- Wed. / Nov. 6: Catholic radicalism: Dorothy Day
Reading: CP 5.4 (Dorothy Day). Recommended: Cahill, pp. 213–18 (on Day).
- Fri. / Nov. 8: Nonviolence in the civil rights movement
Reading: CP 5.5 (Martin Luther King, Jr.).
- Mon. / Nov. 11: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

VI. Revolutionary violence

- Wed. / Nov. 13: The Great Rising of 1381
Reading: CP 6.1 (Peasants' revolts).
- Fri. / Nov. 15: The Peasants' Revolt of 1525
Reading: CP 6.2 (Twelve Articles, Thomas Müntzer, Martin Luther).
- Mon. / Nov. 18: Revolutionary Catholicism in Latin America
Reading: CP 6.3 (Ernesto Cardenal, Daniel Berrigan).
- Wed. / Nov. 20: Revolutionary abolitionism
Reading: CP 6.4 (John Brown, Osborne Anderson).
- Fri. / Nov. 22: Black nationalism
Reading: CP 6.5 (Malcolm X).
- Mon. / Nov. 25: *No class.*

— THANKSGIVING BREAK: NOVEMBER 27–29 —

- Mon. / Dec. 2: **Position paper due / Discussion day**

- VII. You pick the topic!**
- Wed. / Dec. 4: 9/11 and its aftermath?
Reading: TBA
- Fri. / Dec. 6: Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq?
Reading: TBA
- Mon. / Dec. 9: Occupy Wall Street?
Reading: TBA
- Wed. / Dec. 11: Debrief / Review for final exam
No reading