# Moral Injury and War

Unification Theological Seminary, Fall 2013

Mondays, 6:30 – 9:00 pm

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## Description of course

We must heal the wounds of war to create enduring peace. War's visible and invisible wounds, like moral injury, *the betrayal of what is right*, impact our communities today and will for generations to come. What moral obligation does our society have to the people we send to do our killing, and to all who suffer from our war-making? Clergy and faith communities need to be both *prophetic* (engaging the sprawling military industrial complex and our cultural deceptions about war) and *pastoral* (caring for individuals and families before, during, and after military service). In this course students will develop pastoral and prophetic skills integral to transforming society and redeeming the moral injuries and soul wounds that are the inevitable consequence of war.

## Outcomes of the course

a) Students will gain basic familiarity with statements with regards to war in the scriptures and traditions of the world religions and an in depth knowledge of statements from within their own faith community;

b) Students will be exposed to the theologies around militarization as well as just and unjust war, and be able to articulate their own position with regards to militarization and war (both war in general and particular wars), defend their position utilizing the scriptures and traditions of their religious community and demonstrate their readiness to engage in meaningful and intelligent prophetic witness on issues of war in the public square in a manner consistent with their faith tradition;

c) Students will understand the concept of moral injury, it's relationship to *un*just war, and the unique challenges facing war-making societies like the United States and their returning veterans;

d) Students will gain basic familiarity with religious rituals and rites used in history in order to prevent moral injury and facilitate war healing and successful return and will understand how to utilize the power of ritual to lead transformative warrior rites of passage and war healing ministries in their communities;

e) Students will develop a basic skill set to support young adults discerning a military career, and provide pastoral care and counseling to military personnel, veterans returning to civilian life, and their families.

**Rationale for the course**

American society is in crisis: we are faced with thousands of soldiers returning from war, suicide among veterans is at a historical high, and the Department of Veterans Affairs - the primary government institution for providing care - is overwhelmed and unable to meet the needs of all those who suffer from the wars fought in our name. Many of these service members suffer from *moral injury*. Clergy and faith communities are uniquely qualified to tend to these moral injuries, yet need guidance and training to tend this wound.

**Required Texts**

Brock, Rita. *Soul Repair*. S.l.: Beacon, 2013. Print.

($10.20; 174pp.; ISBN-13: 978-0807029077)

Kleiderer, John, Paula Minaert, and Mark Mossa. *Just War, Lasting Peace: What Christian Traditions Can Teach Us*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2006. Print.

($20 on Amazon, $12 from Orbis; 188pp.; ISBN-13: 978-1570756498)

Tick, Edward. *War and the Soul: Healing Our Nation's Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Wheaton, Ill: Quest Books, 2005. Print.

($13.28; 341pp.; ISBN-13: 978-0835608312)

**Requirements for the Course/ How Students are Evaluated**

1. Active Participation in Class: Regular Attendance and active participation on Monday evenings (30%)

2. Weekly Reading (40-60pp /week): Read required texts and additional handouts to be listed on syllabus and submit written responses to questions for discussion at each class (20%);

3. Class Presentations (7 – 10 minutes each) 1. Articulate your position with regards to war (both war in general and particular wars) and defend it utilizing the scriptures and traditions of their religious community 2. Present a written verbatim of a pastoral conversation/interview with a veteran telling their story presented to the class; OR interview with a military chaplain or a Veteran's Hospital chaplain; OR a case study of a military ministry based upon participant observation (30%);

4. Final Project Develop an order of service, including relevant religious ritual and/or rites, to be utilized within religious communities of his/her particular faith to address moral injuries of returning soldiers (20%);

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to do their own work for all assignments. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind is a serious offense at Unification Theological Seminary. For a brief explanation of plagiarism, consult the Unification Theological Seminary Student Handbook 2013-2014. **You are responsibile to know what plagiarism and academic dishonesty are.** Any violation of these rules in this course will result in a failing grade for the assignment, a failing final course grade, and a letter submitted by me to your UTS academic file. Such cases may also be forwarded to the UTS Academic Affairs Committee for further review and disciplinary action.

Outline (Instructor will distribute a schedule of readings on the first day of class)

Week I - Course Introduction

Week II - War in the scriptures and traditions of the world religions, just war theology

Week III - Theologies of militarization

Week IV – Moral accountability, Moral injury, and it's relationship to *un*just war

Case Study – Fr. George Zabelka, Claude Eatherly, & the decision to drop the Atomic Bomb

Week V – Pastoral Care to Military and Returning Veterans

Case Study: Pastoral intervention w/"Angel" Iraq/Afghanistan Veteran

Week VI- Case Studies of effective military/veteran ministries in congregations

Week VII – Issues in counseling young adults considering the military or conscientious objection

Watch and discuss "Soldiers of Conscience"

Week VIII- Just war against terror – issues and concerns

Week IX – Pastoral Care and Counseling used in history in order to facilitate war healing and successful return (Introduction and Part 1 of 4)

Skills for Pastoral Care and Counseling Part 1 Isolation and tending

Verbatim Presentations

Week X – Skills for Pastoral Care and Counseling Part 2 Rituals of purification and cleansing

Verbatim Presentations

Week XI – Skills for Pastoral Care and Counseling Part 3 The healing power of story telling

Verbatim Presentations

Week XII – Skills for Pastoral Care and Counseling Part 4 Warrior initiations and rites of passage

Verbatim Presentations

Week XIII - Ethical issues pertaining to drones, military robotics, and the future of warfare

Week XIV - Presentation of final projects

Week XV - Wrap Up, evaluations

## Course Bibliography

Current as of April 26, 2013

Albright, Madeleine K, and William Woodward. *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. Print.

Alperovitz, Gar, and Sanho Tree. *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*. New York [N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1996. Print.

Benjamin, Medea, and Barbara Ehrenreich. *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*. New York: OR Books, 2012. Print.

Brock, Rita. *Soul Repair*. S.l.: Beacon, 2013. Print.

Day, Jackson H., Elizabeth Vermilyea, Jennifer Wilkerson, Esther Giller. *Risking Connection in Faith Communities: A Training Curriculum for Faith Leaders Supporting Trauma Survivors*. Baltimore, MD: Sidran Institute Press, 2006. Print.

Dewey, Larry. *War and Redemption: Treatment and Recovery in Combat-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*. Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004. Print.

Elshtain, Jean B. *Just War against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World*. New York: Basic Books, 2003. Print.

Frederick, Jim. *Black Hearts: One Platoon's Descent into Madness in the Triangle of Death and the American Struggle in Iraq*. New York: Harmony Books, 2010. Print.

Fuentes, Jazmyne, Steven Niedzielski, Karen Saupe, and Herman J. Keizer. *Moral Injuries in War: [inner Compass No. 1204]*. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Video Productions and Calvin External Relations, 2011. Internet resource.

Gavigan, Bart. *Zabelka: The Reluctant Prophet*. Wilmington, Del: distributed by] Center for Christian Nonviolence, 2006.

Grossman, Dave. *On Killing*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1995. Print.

Hauerwas, Stanley. *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2011. Print.

Hedges, Chris. *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2002. Print.

Kelsay, John. *Arguing the Just War in Islam*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007. Print.

Kleiderer, John, Paula Minaert, and Mark Mossa. *Just War, Lasting Peace: What Christian Traditions Can Teach Us*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2006. Print.

Lifton, Robert Jay. *Home From the War: Vietnam Veterans, Neither Victims Nor Executioners.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973. Print.

Litz, Brett T, Nathan Stein, Eileen Delaney, Leslie Lebowitz, William P. Nash, Caroline Silva, and Shira Maguen. "Moral Injury and Moral Repair in War Veterans: a Preliminary Model and Intervention Strategy." *Clinical Psychology Review*. 29.8 (2009): 695-706. Print.

May, Larry. *War Crimes and Just War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Print.

Mbanda, Laurent, and Steve Wamberg. *Committed to Conflict: The Destruction of the Church in Rwanda*. London: SPCK, 1997. Print.

McCarthy, Emmanuel C. *August 9*. Worcester, MA: Olive Branch Communication, 1990. Print.

Peck, M. Scott. *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*. Touchstone, 1998. Print.

Reimer, A J. *Christians and War: A Brief History of the Church's Teachings and Practices*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010. Print.

Rittner, Carol, John K. Roth, and Wendy Whitworth. *Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches?*Newark, Notts., U.K: Aegis, 2004. Print.

Shay, Jonathan. *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming*. New York: Scribner, 2002. Print.

Shay, Jonathan. *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*. New York: Atheneum, 1994. Print.

Sherman, Nancy. *The Untold War: Inside the Hearts, Minds, and Souls of Our Soldiers*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010. Print.

Singer, P W. *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Penguin Press, 2009. Print.

Smock, David R. *Religious Perspectives on War: Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Attitudes Toward Force After the Gulf War*. Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1992. Print.

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Tirman, John. *The Deaths of Others: The Fate of Civilians in America's Wars*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.

Verkamp, Bernard J. *The Moral Treatment of Returning Warriors in Early Medieval and Modern Times*. Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1993. Print.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. New York: Basic Books, 1977. Print.

Witt, John F. *Lincoln's Code: The Laws of War in American History*. New York: Free Press, 2012. Print.