

Second Paper Topics

Philosophy 456B: Violence, Nonviolence and War
3/6/2018

Write a paper of six to eight pages on one of the following topics. Your pages should contain about 300 words each. If you wish to write your paper on a topic other than those listed, please come to my office hours to discuss your paper idea with me. My office hours are Wednesdays, 2:10 – 4:10 PM in LT 1214, or by appointment.

You may discuss these paper topics, or other issues relevant to this class, with your fellow students; however, the paper you turn in must be substantially your own work. A paper that you wrote for another class is not acceptable. For a detailed explanation of how to use sources properly, consult <http://writingcenter.binghamton.edu>; if you have specific questions, feel free to ask me.

To prevent plagiarism, you are required to submit your essay electronically to Turnitin.com. This is done through the Blackboard website for the course. Papers are due at 10:05 AM, the start of class, on Tuesday, March 20. Late papers will lose one-third of a grade per day, unless I grant you an extension in advance.

Please indicate on your paper which question you are answering. You do not have to reproduce the text of the question in your paper. Number your pages! Make sure that your paper has a clear thesis, and that you state that thesis at or close to the beginning of your paper.

1. Explain one aspect of the morality of war on which Walzer and McMahan disagree. How does Walzer argue for his position on this issue? How does McMahan criticize it? Explain the practical significance of this disagreement, if any. Then discuss how these two philosophers could respond to each others' positions. In view of these arguments and responses, which of these two philosophers has the more convincing account?

2. Describe a particular historical armed conflict or military operation about which you think Walzer and McMahan would have opposing views. What features of these two philosophers' moral commitments would lead to these opposite evaluations? Discuss how each of these philosophers could criticize the other's position on this issue, and what replies might be offered to these criticisms. In view of these criticisms and replies, which of these two philosophers has the more convincing evaluation of the historical event in question?