

## War and Morality

This course will address two very general questions that political leaders and democratic citizens have had to answer again and again: When should we fight, and when not? How should we fight, and how not? I will address these questions from the standpoint of "just war theory," drawing on the arguments of my book *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977; 5th edition 2017). Reading the book will help, but it is not required. Anyone who has lived through World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, and/or the two Iraq wars, reading the newspapers and watching TV news, will have sufficient knowledge to join our discussions. Veterans of any of America's wars are especially welcome.

Half of each session will be devoted to lecturing and half to discussing the topics of the day (arguing, too). I hope to answer, or at least talk about, the following more specific questions:

- How can war and morality sit together?
- What is wrong about aggression, and when is self-defense justified?
- When a country is resisting aggression, is it right for other countries to choose neutrality?
- What justifies (or requires) humanitarian intervention?
- What does it mean to say that civilians are "immune" from attack?
- How should we fight asymmetric wars?
- What is the "war on terrorism"?
- Should we abandon nuclear weapons?
- What sorts of post-war settlements are justified?
- How should we deal with war criminals?

Some of these questions may get short shrift, but the aim of the course is to get through them all. Like a good drill sergeant, I will try to keep the discussions marching forward.

**Leader:** Michael Walzer is professor emeritus in the School of Social Science at the Institute of Advanced Study. He has written on war and morality, foreign policy, and many topics in political theory.

**Tuesdays:** 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., 6 weeks: September 25 through November 6 (no class on October 9)

**Location:** Monument Hall