Ethics of War

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Importance of this topic

- US DoD budget proposal: $718.3 billion
- Constant mass destruction
- Iraq body count

**Figure 2.** The share of world military expenditure of the 15 states with the highest spending in 2017
Ethics of War

- What are the rules?
  - Moral and legal
- Why have rules?
- Case study of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Just War Theory

- **Jus ad Bellum**
  - What makes it justifiable to go to war in the first place?
- **Jus In Bello**
  - What is just conduct in war?
- **Jus Post Bellum**
  - What is just conduct after war?
Jus ad Bellum - *What makes it justifiable to go to war in the first place?*

- **Just cause**
  - National Defense and Humanitarian Intervention

- **Legitimate authority**
  - War is fought by an entity that has the authority to fight such wars

- **Right Intention**
  - That entity intends to achieve the just cause, rather than using it as an excuse to achieve some wrongful end

- **Reasonable Prospects of Success**
  - The war is sufficiently likely to achieve its aims

- **Last resort (Necessity)**
  - All other forms of solution must be attempted prior to the declaration of war
Jus In Bello - *What is just conduct in war?*

- **Discrimination**
  - Attack only military personnel

- **Proportionality and Necessity**
  - Harms must be proportionate to military goals achieved
Jus Post Bellum - *What is just conduct after war?*

- **Discrimination**
  - Punishments on those involved, not innocents
  - War crimes trials

- **Claims proportional to losses**
  - Reparations and their extent

- **Political and economic reconstruction**
Which wars has the US fought in that you would consider “wars of necessity?”
Geneva Conventions

- Protects
  - Wounded and sick soldiers on land and at sea
  - Prisoners of war
  - Civilians
Why Have the Rules?

● Ad Bellum
  ○ Less likely because need just cause
  ○ Legitimate authority
  ○ Last resort
  ○ Limits the amount of wars

● In Bello
  ○ Some people are innocent and that matters
  ○ Soldiers/active war people expect death
    ■ Know it’s their potential outcome
    ■ Non-combatants don’t
  ○ Proportionality
Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

- Necessity?
- Proportionality?
Challenges to dropping the bomb

- Anscombe - deontologist
- “You may never do evil that good may come”
- We should not have bombed Hiroshima
- We dropped the bombs because we wanted an unconditional surrender
  - The demand was immoral
• When discussing future wars, is it better to examine past wars and behaviors or should we create hypothetical wars and scenarios?
• Is it just to bomb non-combatants? What about medical personnel?
Bibliography

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PragerU. “Was It Wrong to Drop the Atom Bomb on Japan?” YouTube. (September 2014). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmIBbxseXM (accessed April 14, 2019) (slide 11)