

Course Syllabus

Philosophy 192-01: Collective Responsibility

Erin Kelly

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This course will be concerned with *collective* wrongdoing, liability, guilt, and apologies. We will analyze the moral and legal dimensions of conspiracy and complicity, notions of group action and group identity, and the moral implications of group responsibility for individual members. We will also consider alternatives to vengeance-based responses to the collective violence of oppression, unjust wars, and genocide. In particular, we will examine the nature and value of apologies, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Readings:

(B) Blackboard website <http://blackboard.tufts.edu> (readings located under “Assignments”)

Griswold, Charles L. *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007.

Kutz, Christopher. *Complicity: Ethics and Law for a Collective Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.

Smith, Nick. *I Was Wrong: The Meaning of Apologies*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008.

Jan. 20 Brian Barry, “The Cult of Personal Responsibility” (B)

Responsibility and Unjust War

Jan. 22 Karl Jaspers, “The Question of German Guilt,” pp. 21-44 (B)

Recommended: Richard Evans, “The Coming of the Third Reich,” Ch. 4 (B)

Jan. 27 Jaspers, “The Question of German Guilt,” pp. 45-75 (B)

Recommended: Evans, “The Coming of the Third Reich,” Ch. 5 (B)

Jan. 29 Jaspers, “The Question of German Guilt,” pp. 76-117 (B)

Feb. 3 Lionel K. McPherson, “Innocence and Responsibility in War” (B)

Memory, Acknowledgement, and Group Identity

Feb. 5 Jeffrey Blustein, “Doing Justice to the Past,” pp. 110-148 (B)

Feb. 10 Blustein, “Doing Justice to the Past,” pp. 148-169 (B)

Ian Buruma, “The Joys and Perils of Victimhood,” (B)

Feb. 12 Stanley Cohen, “Digging Up Graves, Opening Up Wounds, Acknowledging the Past” (B)

Group Action, Joint Obligation, and Guilt

Feb. 17 Margaret Gilbert, “Introduction: Sociality and Plural Subject Theory” (B)

Gilbert, “Obligation and Joint Commitment” (B)

Feb. 19 no class (Monday schedule)

Feb. 24 Gilbert, “Group Membership and Political Obligation”(B)

Gilbert, “Collective Remorse” (B)

- Feb. 26 Gilbert, "Agreements, Coercion, and Obligation" (B)
 Mar. 3 Gilbert, "Who's to Blame? Collective Responsibility and Its Implications for Group Members" (B)

The Nature of Complicity

- Mar. 5 Kutz, *Complicity*, Ch. 2 (pp. 17-48)
 Mar. 10 Kutz, *Complicity*, Ch. 3 (pp. 74-85, 113-124) and Ch. 4 (138-145)
 Mar. 12 Kutz, *Complicity*, Ch. 5

Mid-term paper due (8-10 pages)

- Mar. 24 Kutz, *Complicity*, Ch. 6
 Mar. 26 Held, "Group Responsibility for Ethnic Conflict"
 Mar. 31 Kutz, *Complicity*, Ch. 7

The Ethics of Apologizing and Forgiving

- Apr. 2 Griswold, *Forgiveness*, Ch. 1
 Apr. 7 Griswold, *Forgiveness*, Ch. 2 (pp. 38-72)
 Apr. 9 Griswold, *Forgiveness*, Ch. 4 (pp. 134-163)
 Apr. 14 Griswold, *Forgiveness*, Ch. 4 (pp. 163-194)
 Apr. 16 Smith, *I Was Wrong*, Chs. 1-2 (pp. 17-55)
 Apr. 21 Smith, *I Was Wrong*, Chs. 8-10 (pp. 155-178)
 Apr. 23 Smith, *I Was Wrong*, Ch. 10 (pp. 204-223, 239-244)
 May 1 **Final paper due (10-12 pages)**

Course Requirements

Class attendance and participation	
Mid-term paper (8-10 pages)	40%
Final paper (10-12 pages)	60%

Writing Workshop

The optional writing workshop provides an opportunity for further analysis of course material in a relaxed, small group environment. It will emphasize informal ungraded writing exercises on the readings and themes of the course, and will aim to promote greater understanding, to stimulate creative thought and expression, and to advance formal writing skills. Writing will also be used to facilitate discussion. Peer review of papers written for the course will enable you to gather critical feedback and to revise your work. The writing workshop will meet each Monday in the D block.