

THE UNITED STATES NAVAL WAR COLLEGE



ELECTIVE COURSE 101

SYLLABUS

FOUNDATIONS OF MORAL OBLIGATION

Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN
Professor Joseph G. Brennan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

EL 101 - FOUNDATIONS OF MORAL OBLIGATION

Since Socrates, moral philosophy has been taught both as a technical discipline and as a guide to life. Basic ideas to be discussed in this course include right, good, honor, duty, freedom, necessity, law, justice, happiness, insofar as these pertain to the human situation generally and to the military method in particular. Lecture topics, discussions and readings will be drawn from both classical and modern sources, including the Old Testament, the Socratic Dialogues of Plato, the ethical writings of Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and Sartre. There will be supplemental readings in Emerson, Thoreau, Dostoyevsky, Conrad, Koestler, and Solzhenitsyn.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Readings: Required and Recommended

Required readings are listed below by week. Recommended readings will be on Library reserve, but are not required reading. Unit notes for most weeks' topics will be distributed in advance of the particular week and are to be considered required readings.

Novels and stories on the required reading list lend themselves easily to reading in advance of the beginning of the course. Attention to these readings in advance, if convenient, is suggested so that a greater amount of time may be made available for the more technical readings.

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READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK ONE - From 20th Century Technology to the World of Epictetus. The Meaning of Moral Philosophy.

- Required: Stockdale, J.B., "The World of Epictetus," Atlantic Monthly, April, 1978.
- Koestler, A., Darkness at Noon. (A novel) ✓
- Walzer, M., "Prisoners of War." Obligations.
- Recommended: Wright, Ross W., "These Were Some of the Happiest Days of My Life," Rhode Islander, 27 Nov. 1977.

WEEK TWO - The Book of Job. Life is not Fair. The Problem of Evil.

- Required: Job, "The Book of Job," Old Testament
- Solzhenitsyn, A., One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch.
- Recommended: Camus, A., The Myth of Sisyphus; The Plague. (A novel)

WEEK THREE - Socrates: Doctrine and Example. Civil Obedience and Disobedience. Can Virtue Be Taught?

- Required: Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito; Phaedo.
- Recommended: Plato, Meno in DIALOGUES OF PLATO
- Thoreau, H., Civil Disobedience.

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JACOB*

WEEK FOUR - Happiness as Living Well and Faring Well. Aristotle on the Moral and Intellectual Virtues. Courage as Balance and Endurance.

- Required: Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics. (Selections)
- Crane, S., "The Open Boat." (Story)
- Conrad, J., Typhoon. (Short novel)
- Recommended: Plato, Laches, in DIALOGUES OF PLATO.

WEEK FIVE - Ethics of Duty and Conscience. Internal and External Law. Ethic Meaning of "Ought" and "Right."

Required: Kant, I., Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals, pp. 9-59.

Hart, H.L.A., The Concept of Law. Chapters 8 and 9.

WEEK SIX - Morality as Social Utility. Justice and the Greatest Happiness Principles.

Required: Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism.

Recommended: Mill, J.S., On Liberty.

Rawls, J., "Justice as Fairness."

Rawls, J., A Theory of Justice.

Kristol, I. "On Equality."

WEEK SEVEN - Individualism and the Collective - I.

Required: Emerson, R.W., "Self-Reliance" in Emerson, Essays.

Sartre, J-P, "Existentialism Is a Humanism" in Kaufmann, W., ed., Existentialism From Dostoyevsky to Sartre.

Dostoyevsky, F., "Notes from the Underground" in Kaufmann, Existentialism.

WEEK EIGHT - Individualism and the Collective - II.

Required: Marx-Engels, The Communist Manifesto.

Lenin, V.I., What Is to be Done? in R.C. Tucker, ed., The Lenin Anthology.

Dostoyevsky, F., "The Grand Inquisitor" from The Brothers Karamazov.

Recommended: DeGeorge, R., Soviet Ethics.

WEEK NINE - Science and Values. Does the Universe Have Meaning or Purpose?

Required: Monod, J., Chance and Necessity, Chapters 1, 2, 7, 8, 9.

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13 DEC

PAUSE

3-6 pages

MJERA

Sinsheimer, R.L., "The Presumptions of Science," DAEDALUS, Spring 1978.

Recommended: Watson, J., The Double Helix.

Kuhn, T., The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.

21 DEC
WEEK TEN - Return to the Beginning. Epictetus. The Stoic Ideal and the Ethics of the Military Man. Philosophy as Technical Analysis and Way of Life. The Socratic Example.

Required: Epictetus, Enchiridion.

Malcolm, N., Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir.

Plato, Phaedo (opening and death scene).

Stockdale, J.B., Selections.

Recommended: Gray, G., The Warriors.

FINAL DRAFT

VELIKOVSKY

TITLE: EL 101 Foundations of Moral Obligation, VADM J. B. Stockdale

ELECTIVE DESCRIPTION: Since Socrates, moral philosophy has been taught both as a technical discipline and as a guide to life. Basic ideas to be discussed in this course include right, good, honor, duty, freedom, necessity, law, justice, happiness, insofar as these pertain to the human situation generally and to the military ethos in particular. Lecture topics, discussions and readings will be drawn from both classical and modern sources. The tentative reading list includes the following required or recommended selections:

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
Aristotle	<u>Nichomachean Ethics</u> (selections)
*Camus, A.	<u>The Plague</u> , <u>The Myth of Sisyphus</u>
Conrad, J.	"Typhoon"
Crane, S.	"The Open Boat"
Dostoyevsky, F.	"The Grand Inquisitor" from <u>The Brothers Karamazov</u>
	"Notes From the Underground"
*Durant, W. & A.	<u>Lessons of History</u>
Emerson, R. W.	"Self-Reliance" in <u>Essays and English Traits</u>
Epictetus	<u>Enchiridion</u>
*Gray, G.	<u>The Warriors</u>
Hart, H. L. A.	<u>The Concept of Law</u>
Job	Book of Job (Old Testament)
Lenin, V. I.	"What is to be Done?"
Kant, I.	<u>Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals</u> (selections)
Koestler, A.	<u>Darkness at Noon</u>
*Maccoby, M.	<u>The Gamesman</u>
Malcolm, N.	<u>Ludwig Wittgenstein: a Memoir</u>
Marx, K.	"Communist Manifesto"
Mill, J. S.	<u>Utilitarianism, On Liberty</u>
Monod, J.	<u>Chance and Necessity</u>
Plato	<u>Euthyphro, Crito, Apology, Phaedo</u>
*Rawls, J.	"Justice As Fairness", <u>Theory of Justice</u>
*Sagan, C.	<u>The Dragons of Eden</u>
Sartre, J-P	"Existentialism is a Humanism"
Sinsheimer, R. L.	"The Presumptions of Science"
Smith, H.	<u>Kamongo</u>
Solzhenitsyn, A.	<u>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch</u>
Stockdale, J. B.	<u>Selected Writings</u>
Walzer, M.	"Prisoners of War"
*Watson, J.	<u>The Double Helix</u>
*Wright, R. W.	"Those Were Some of the Happiest Days of My Life"

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