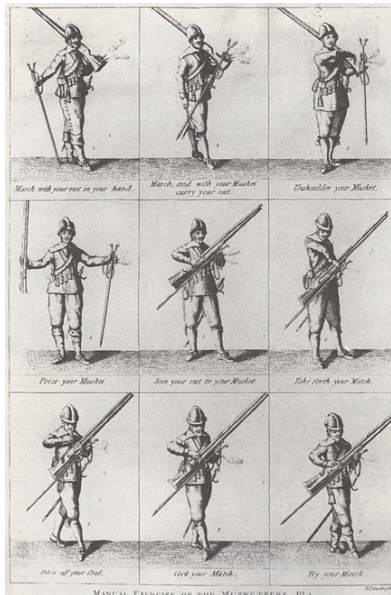


REL 371.001/PSC 325.003 - Social Bodies: Doctrines, Virtues, Faith
Departments of Religious Studies and Political Science – Spring 2022
Dr. Daniel Levine

Mondays, 12:30-2:50 pm
210 Presidents' Hall (PRH)

[Last Revised: 19 Jan 23]



[Plate from *Manual of the Musketeers* (17th c.), reproduced from John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (Random House, 1993).

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manual_of_the_Musketeer,
17th_Century.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manual_of_the_Musketeer,_17th_Century.jpg)

Contact information

Email: djlevine@ua.edu

Office: 311 ten Hoor Hall

Office hours: Wednesday 1-2:30pm, Friday, 3-4pm, or by appointment as/if necessary. (To arrange special office hours or meet by Zoom, email me at the address above.)

Overview

"A well-run [military] camp is a school of virtue." So claimed the *Souldiers Catechisme* (1644), written in support of Oliver Cromwell's 'New Model Army'. The NMA would play a distinctive role in the emergence of new, distinctively 'modern' ways of doing politics and fighting wars – suggesting overlaps between the education of citizens and religious initiates. Drawing on a mix of texts, periods, and perspectives, the seminar explores these overlaps, with an eye to contemporary politics: a moment in which the relations between temporal communities and spiritual ones appear once again to be in flux.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students enrolled in this course will be expected to:

- *Read and analyze* conceptually challenging texts with an eye to their key arguments
- *Relate those texts to one another* in terms of agreement or disagreement, whether in discussion, in formal academic writing, or through timed/expository writing (ie, exams)
- *Reflect* on the key themes of this course with specific reference to contemporary politics and political practice
- *Formulate and sustain* original arguments based on these reflections

Aims of the Course

1. To compare key concepts of political virtue (prudence, courage, wisdom), with those of religious virtue (righteousness, piety, goodness).
2. To compare the ways in which these virtues are taught, advocated for, and learned, with an eye to similarities or links between them. What can we learn from such similarities?
3. To expose you to, and help you develop, a speculative/reflective mode of thinking, reading, and arguing – and to apply it to contemporary political life/experience/practice.

Books and Readings

Print books. One text has been ordered at the Supply Store:

- Axe, David and Matt Bors: *War is Boring* (New American Library, 2010). ISBN 978-0451230119
[NB: cheap used copies on Amazon; order in advance and save a bit.]

PDFs, ebooks, and electronic media. Additional readings will be available as electronic texts. In most cases, these will be PDF scans, which have been (or will be) on 'Box.' Use this link to access them:
<https://alabama.box.com/s/an9pp30kimcko1daxgsp0dub9aqcxy3b>.

E-books, journal articles, or videos held or licensed by Gorgas Library can be accessed electronically, on or off-campus, with your UA login credentials. Links may be found below. The same thing with videos or other materials accessible through the 'open' web.

Please be in touch if you experience access or accessibility difficulties.

Communicating Outside Class

Emails from me will come from my UA email account (djlevine@ua.edu or daniel.j.levine@ua.edu) – you may wish to add these to your spam filters. To reach you, I will use whatever email address has been placed on file with 'myBama.' You are free to contact me using these email addresses anytime – but office hours are still the best means for communicating and problem solving.

Preparing for Class

Come regularly, be prepared. You will notice that our class meets only once a week – for three hours at a stretch. This means a couple of things. First, your readings will often be longer than courses that meet twice or three times a week; we are covering more ground. It follows that you should budget more time to 'prepping' – reading, taking notes, and reflecting on them – than for a 50- or 75-minute class section. If you miss class, there will be little I can do to recapitulate a three-hour session, or the discussion that

unfolds within it. It also means that if you come unprepared, you'll be 'cooling your heels' three hours at a stretch (but still better to come unprepared than not at all!).

Bring. The. Text. Our discussions will focus on close readings drawn from an eclectic range of written texts. Bring a copy of any text we are discussing, along with a convenient way to take notes. These may be electronic or 'old school', but they should be easy/conveniently accessible.

Take notes. Whether you read the text electronically or on paper, take notes – in the margins, with highlighters, in a notebook, or in a word document. If you have questions, insights, or make connections to other things you've read – make a note of them here and hold onto them.

Look for things that bother, irritate, interest, amuse, or puzzle you – reflect on them and raise them with others – in class, over lunch, or in office hours. If you have trouble understanding a reading, just do your best – give yourself extra time, or put it down and come back to it. Or, come to office hours with questions. If you have time, try to outline the argument, or respond to it – the more closely you track the 'moves' in an argument, the clearer it will be.

Prep times. Different people work differently, but here is a rule of thumb: seminars at this level work best if you devote about 2 hours of prep per hour of class. That includes reading, taking notes, reviewing the syllabus, reflecting on discussion in class and notes you've taken from our discussions, etc. When a 'critical mass' of students do this, the discussions in class really cook – because we're each coming with a bunch of ideas to throw 'into the mix.'

What should you read for? Again, different people work differently, but this is what I try to do: I try to read or reflect on an argument along 2-3 lines. First, with an eye to 'big picture' arguments – the 'big question' or 'key takeaway' that animates the text. Second, with an eye to how the argument unfolds, or small flashes or insights that come up when I read it. If the text is based on history, what are the key events the author has chosen to highlight, and do I think their narrative makes sense? What anecdotes or events 'stick' with me? If it's based on a series of logical moves, what are those moves, and do they hold? If it's work of fiction, how do I respond to it emotionally – and what about it drives that response?

Third, what 'work' does a text do – ie, what's the author's 'stake' or goal in the argument? Texts are written *for someone and for some purpose* – they do not evolve spontaneously in nature. What do the authors hope will happen as a result of their work being widely read and its argument broadly accepted? What work might the texts do, beyond what the authors intend?

WHY SO HARD?? The materials I have chosen are often quite challenging. That's as it should be – the easy texts you can read on your own.

That said, a hard text is a challenge, and learning to deal with that challenge – 'finding your way in' – is as important a skill as a liberal arts education can impart. Draw out what you can, or pose questions: why is the text written as it is? What makes it difficult to read? What would you need to know to make sense of it? What assumptions does the author make that you might not be aware of? What pieces of it *do* make sense despite the difficulty, and what can you piece together from them? Can you name the thing that's missing?

Course Requirements & Assessment

1. Preparation and Participation. Two key points here. First, as noted, this is a seminar class. It thrives or dies on active, engaged participation. *Merely showing up does not suffice.* Second – also as noted – we meet only once a week. If you get into the habit of missing class, you will quickly find yourself ‘in the weeds.’¹

Accommodation can/will be made for students who are obliged to miss the occasional class owing to documented illness, university-mandated travel, or personal emergencies – so long as they are generally active, well-prepared participants. If you have concerns on this point, or find that you cannot attend class regularly, come see me.

2. Written Assignments. There will be one short response paper (2-3 pp), and two longer essays (4-6pp each). These will be returned to you with extensive comments. You will be encouraged to use these comments to revise the paper and resubmit it. If the revised paper is significantly improved, your grade will be revised upwards. (In no case will the revised paper receive a lower grade than the original submission.)

This is a large public university; you each bring different strengths and weaknesses. Students who struggle with the technical aspects of writing – sentence mechanics, syntax and grammar, organizing ideas around a thesis, etc. – will be expected to address themselves to these. Students who evince relative mastery of these skills will be pointed to additional texts or more sophisticated arguments. My aim is to meet you where you are and help you progress.

In either case, I recommend taking advantage of the R&R component – revision is a key aspect in the ‘craft’ of writing, and there is always room to improve. I will place a rubric on Box to give you a sense of how the papers will be graded.

Papers must be your own, original work. You are certainly free to ask other people (or ensouled AI devices) to critique your work, or to suggest ‘jumping off points’ – *but not to revise or compose original prose for you.*

If you have difficulty with the mechanics of writing, I strongly recommend that you avail yourself of the services offered by the Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.ua.edu>.

3. Final. The final will center on open-format essay questions and will emphasize the substantive topics of the course. [If you wish to get a sense of the format, I’ve placed a final from a course taught last spring on Box. (Note: this exam is provided only to give you a sense of the format – the substantive focus of that course was very different.)

¹ At present, I am not requiring short ‘clapback’ response papers for each week’s readings. If I get the impression that non-preparation has become endemic, however, I may revisit this. In that event, the grading modus for the class will be adjusted (see below).

Key Due Dates:

- Short response paper – topics will be uploaded to box by 1/31.
- Due on 2/6.
- First Paper Topics Distributed: 2/27
- First Paper Due: 3/6
- Second paper topics distributed: 4/14
- Second paper due: 4/21
- Last day for revisions/resubmissions: 4/24
- Final Examination: Thursday, 5/4, 10:30-12:30 (in our regular meeting room)

How your Final Grade Will be Calculated*

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Attendance & participation | 20% |
| Short response paper | 10% |
| Paper 1 | 25% |
| Paper 2 | 25% |
| Final | 20% |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>100%</i> |

Grading Scale

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| A+ 99-100% | B+ 87-90% | C+ 77-80% | D+ 67-70% |
| A 93-99% | B 83-87% | C 73-77% | D 63-67% |
| A- 90-93% | B- 80-83% | C- 70-73% | D- 60-63% |
| | | | F < 60% |

Grades will not be rounded.

Public Health, Social Distancing, and Remote Learning

As of the beginning of the semester, this course had an enrollment of 17, and our room has a nominal capacity of 20. Should we need to revert to social distancing, I may attempt to move us to a larger room (so we can 'spread out'), so as to avoid the need for an online/virtual option. If public health developments require us to switch to this, or if some of you need to self-quarantine, I may revisit this. In that event, I will be in touch.

Changes to the Syllabus/Readings

Every effort will be made to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as stated here. That said, I reserve the right to change and/or amend these guidelines – whether in keeping with class discussions, your

* As noted, if non-preparation becomes a problem, short 'clapback' assignments may be added. In that event, I will adjust the overall weightings of the various assignments as follows: attendance & participation 15%; short response paper 10%; clapbacks 15%; two papers and final, 20% each.

interests, or other circumstances as may arise. In such cases, I will communicate with you via email and in class and provide reasonable accommodations for anyone who requires them.

Additional Course Policies

See pp. 10-11, below.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Module 1 (1/23) – Welcome/First Steps

Topics: 1. Welcome & introductions. 2. What is a catechism, and what is it for? 3. Course & syllabus overview

Reading:

Souldiers Catechism (London: Elliott Stock, 1900 [1644]), *entire*. [Box]

Module 2 (1/30) – The Problem of the Ineffable

Topics: 1. How do we teach or learn that which we cannot name, or even imagine? 2. Negative and minimal theology and the rhetoric of opposition. 3. The political and the ineffable.

Readings:

Hillel Ben-Sasson: “Conditional Presence: The Meaning of the Name YHWH in the Bible.”
Understanding YHWH (Palgrave-Macmillan 2019), pp. 25-53 [Box]²

Athanasius of Alexandria (4th c.): “Creed of St. Athanasius” (also known as the *Quicumque Vult*, ‘Whosoever wishes’); here *infra The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Oxford, 1990), 864-5. [box]

Daniel b. Judah (Rome, 14th c.): *Yigdal* (“He Shall Magnify”); here *infra Siddur Lev Shalem* (New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 2016), 62. [box]

Dan Pagis: “Testimony” (see pdf for source details). [box]

Module 3 (2/6) – Is Prudence Ineffable?

Topics: 1. Civic vs. religious virtue. 2. Prudence as ‘the queen of the virtues.’ 3. Prudence and *phronesis*. 4. Is prudence ineffable? If so, how is politics like religion?

Readings:

Barbara Cassin, et al.: “Prudence.” *Dictionary of Untranslatables* (Princeton, 2014), pages TBA. [Box]

² This chapter includes a lengthy appendix (pp 53-63), which is *super-duper interesting*, if you want to go ‘into the weeds’ of Hebrew language and biblical interpretation. For that reason, I have left it in the PDF copy on box. But it’s also very technical, and for many of you it will be either confusing or a distraction. Consider it optional.

Harry Gould: "Prudence." In Michael Gibbons, *et al.* (eds.): *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (West Sussex: Wiley/Blackwell, 2015), 329-32. [Box]

Niccolò Machiavelli: *The Prince* (Oxford, 2005 [1532]), ch. 21, 3pp [Box]

Proverbs, ch. 26 (tr. Robert Alter, Norton, 2019) III, 433-36 [Box]

Assignment:

Short response paper (2-3 pp) due in class today (see question/assignment sheet, online)

Module 4 (2/13) – Ineffability, Phenomenology & *Phronesis*

Topics: 1. Phenomenology as an answer to the ineffable. 2. *Phronesis* and practical philosophy

Readings:

Martin Shuster: *How to Measure a World: Toward a Philosophy of Judaism* (Indiana, 2021), 1-25. [Box]

Module 5 (2/20) – The "Gallery of the Soul:" Catechizing *Phronesis*

Topics: 1. Catechesis as emancipation; 2., visual and rhetorical tropes in self-making; 3. Becoming a citizen in a 'republic of believers.'

Readings:

Stanley Fish: *The Living Temple* (California, 1978), 1-50. [box]

John Donne: "A Sermon of Valediction at my Going into Germany," Lincoln's Inn, April 1619.
Infra George Potter and Evelyn Simpson (eds.): *The Sermons of John Donne, Volume II* (California, 1955 [1619]), 237-8 (box)

Module 6 (2/27). The Brotherhood of Arms (1): Elites

Topics: 1. 'Galleries' of experience and duty; 2. Military life and metaphors of family solidarity

Readings:

Sarah Eigen Figal: "When Brothers are Enemies: Fredrick the Great's Catechism for War." *Eighteenth Century Studies* 43:1 (2009), 21-36. [Box]

Elizabeth Samet: *Soldier's Heart* (Picador, 2007), 185-214. [box]

Assignments:

Paper 1 topics will be uploaded/circulated today

Module 7 (3/6) – Citizen Soldiers and Democratic Ethics

Topics: 1. Galleries of experience and duty. 2. Discipline, fear, and solidarity

Readings:

Character Guidance (United States Army Signals Corps, *The Big Picture*, no. 429, ND), 29 mins.

View here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzMmcu8BOvA&list=PL8914666A000F8459&index=176>

Assignments:

Paper 1 due today

[3/13 – Spring Break: No Class]

Module 8 (3/20) – The Brotherhood of Arms (2): Citizens and Soldiers

Topics: 1. Fear and the management of fear. 2. ‘The New Faith in the Common Man’ and popular-front militarism. 3. Rhetorics of realism

Readings:

SLA Marshall: *Men Against Fire* (New York: William Morrow, 1947), chs 4, 9-10 (39 pp). [box]*

Ralph Ingersoll: “An Army is Quite a Thing.” *The Battle is the Payoff* (New York: Harcourt, 1943), 81-96

Film: *Gung Ho! The Story of Carlson’s Makin Island Raiders* (Dir, Ray Enright, Universal Films, 1943). [Note, this is the black and white film from 1943 with Randolph Scott, not the 1980s film with Michael Keaton. Link to the Youtube channel here: https://youtu.be/M1o_relHWFs, or stream free on Amazon Prime, Paramount+ and elsewhere.

Module 9 (3/27) – The Brotherhood of Arms (3): Peoples’ War

Topics: 1. Technical transformation of war (moar freedom = moar war!); 2., Citizenship as a disciplinary regime. 3. Tragic and comic views of politics

Readings:

Tom Wintringham: *New Ways of War* (Penguin, 1941), 73-128 [Box]**

Jules Romain: *Verdun* (Knopf, 1938), 53-55; 426-57 [box]

Starship Troopers (Paul Verhoeven, dir; Tri-Star, 1997) [if we have time, we might stream a few bits in class].

Module 10 (4/3) – Prisons of Affect (1): Dead Inside

Topics: 1. War in the Era of Catastrophe 2., After Tragedy

* A scan of the entire book has been placed on Box. You do not need to read it all, however – only the parts indicated. Also note that the pagination here is based on the page numbers from the original book, not the page # on your PDF reader, which may vary.

** Here too, I’ve placed a pdf of the whole book in Box, but you don’t have to read it all. Also, the same proviso re pagination as above – pls. refer to the pages from the original book (at the bottom of each scanned page).

Readings:

David Axe and Matt Bors: *War is Boring* (New American Library, 2010), *entire*. [Amazon/Supply Store]

S. N. Eisenstat: "How Shall We Receive Our Brothers?" (Cultural Service, Israel Defence Forces, 1949), *entire*. [box]***

Modules 11-12 (4/10 & 4/17) – Prisons of Affect (2): "Mastering your Nonverbals"

Topics: Special Ops, 'culture warriors,' and the weaponization of affect

Readings:

Nomi Stone: *Pinelandia* (California, 2022), 1-123, 155-end. [Gorgas E-Book]
<http://library.ua.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=11059567>

Assignments:

Second Paper – Questions posted by 4/14
Second Paper Due 4/21

Module 13 (4/24). What Shall We Love? How Shall We Love?

Topics: Ethics for a world of instability, panic and weaponized culture

Readings:

Franny Choi: "The World Keeps Ending, and the World Goes On." *Poetry* (December 2019).
[box]

Kae Tempest *et al.*: *Paradise* (London : Royal National Theatre, 2021), viewable here :
https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C5193324?account_id=14472&usage_group_id=96209 (access via Gorgas Library; you'll need your login ID).****

Assignments:

Last day for revisions/resubmissions

Final Examination: Thursday, 5/4, 10:30-12:30 (in our regular meeting room)

Have Great Summer!

*** This will be an original translation, from a Hebrew-language source I'm working on. Stay tuned for more info!

**** This is a video recording of a play staged by the Royal National Theatre in the UK – a remake of an ancient Greek tragedy called *Philoctetes*, by Sophocles. More details will follow!

Additional University and Course Policies

UA's COVID-19 Health and Safety Information

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, specific health and safety standards are in place to minimize exposure and community spread on campus. In the interest of your health and safety and that of all UA students, faculty and staff, the University reserves the right to change the mode of instruction or schedule of instruction at any time, based upon prevailing public health and other guidance. While the method of delivery may change, educational instruction and opportunities will continue. As such, the University will not provide a refund of tuition, in whole or in-part, based on any such changes. Detailed information on changes in format or schedule can be found at studentaccounts.ua.edu and financialaid.ua.edu.

UA students, faculty and staff are required to comply with [UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Task Force](#) guidance regarding social distancing, face coverings and other measures.

Getting vaccinated is the best way to [protect yourself and our herd](#). COVID-19 vaccines are being administered by the [University Medical Center, the Student Health Center](#) and various businesses and healthcare providers. Students who [report proof of their vaccination status](#) will receive Bama Cash as a thank you gift for doing their part.

Course Accommodations

This course is intended to be inclusive for all University of Alabama students. If you have any kind of disability – emotional, physical, cognitive, or learning-related (whether apparent or otherwise) – please feel free to contact me to discuss reasonable accommodations. Accommodations may also be made for those whose financial, legal, medical, or family situations (*inter alia*) compromise their ability to engage with the course. If you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are invited to contact me to discuss your specific needs.

I also encourage you to contact the Office of Disability Services (1000 Houser Hall; [205 348-4285](tel:2053484285) Voice; [205-348-3081](tel:2053483081) TTY; ods@ua.edu). ODS can help you document your needs and create an accommodation plan for *all* your classes without disclosing your condition or diagnosis to course instructors. Accommodations will be provided upon request and individually tailored, given the remote learning instructional method and the flexibility this entails. In order to maintain equity, certain accommodations (including, but not limited to, extensions and alternative assignments) may be extended classwide.

University policy on this matter may be obtained via the [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#), as detailed in the Online Catalog.

Recording Class Sessions or Course Content

Students may not record and/or post course content publicly, including on social media sites. Students who do so may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

It is not presently my intention to record class sessions. If it becomes necessary to do so (eg, for public health reasons), you will be notified before any recording takes place, and presented with options as regards your privacy.

All pre- and live-recorded lectures, presentations, and class discussions are for viewing by students in this course and section only, for as long as they are enrolled. They may not be posted in any public forum or shared with anyone not enrolled in this class. Any student violating these rules may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) provided in the Online Catalog, and with the academic honor pledge.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest [Severe Weather Guidelines](#) in the Online Catalog.

UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the [UAct website](#).

Religious Observances

Students should notify me in writing/via email during of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance *at least* two weeks in advance of the holiday in question. I will work to provide reasonable opportunities to complete academic responsibilities, within the overall remit of the course. Full policy at [Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines](#).