

# **Just War Theory**

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- **A doctrine of military ethics**
  - When is it right to go to war?
  - How should we act during war?
  - What are our responsibilities after war?
- Write your ideas for what *you think* should be included in any Just War criteria. Come up with a list of things that need to be met in order to justify war.



# Classic Just War Theory

- **When is it right to go to war? (*Jus ad bellum*)**
  - Just reason
    - Must have a good reason, like decreasing suffering; not to punish people or take things
  - Competent authority
    - Only appointed authorities can declare war
  - Probability of success
    - Must be likely to win
  - Last resort
    - All other options must be tried first
  - Proportionality
    - The benefits must outweigh the expected harms

# Classic Just War Theory

- **How should we act during war? (*Jus in bello*)**
  - Distinction
    - War should be directed toward enemy combatants, not toward non-combatants caught in a situation they did not create
  - Proportionality
    - Attacks must not exceed what is necessary for military advantage
  - Military necessity
    - Use as little force as you can to win
  - Fair treatment of prisoners
    - No torture or other mistreatment
  - No evil tactics
    - No rape, plunder, etc.; no using weapons that cannot be controlled

# Classic Just War Theory

- **What are our responsibilities after war? (*Jus post bellum*)**
  - Right intention
    - No revenge
    - Both the victors and the defeated must be accountable for war crimes
  - Public declaration and authority
    - Peace agreements must be made by legitimate authority
  - Discrimination
    - Victors must differentiate between political and military leaders, and combatants and civilians
  - Proportionality
    - Any terms of surrender must not be excessive compared to the rights initially violated



As we begin to study  
the histories of U.S.  
wars, why is it  
important for you to  
know that your teacher  
is a pacifist?