

Watershed Community School

Fall Semester, 2007

Ethical Issues in War

Instructor: Ralph Moore

Mon, 1-2:10pm, Wed, 9-10:10am, Fri, 10-11:45am

This course is an examination of war in many contexts—such as, history, culture, religion, politics and ethics. The objectives of this study are that each participant will be able to express and apply—

- 1) knowledge of how wars have arisen in the life of nations and cultures
- 2) insight into war as it is experienced by combatants and civilians
- 3) the ability to analyze and interpret media portrayals of conflicts (past and present) and find alternative sources of information
- 4) a secure understanding of his/her core values and how they have formed
- 5) the ability to apply her/his core values to personal decisions and actions as a citizen within the cultural and political realities of the United States
- 6) experience in dialogue and reasoning as she/he faces ethical dilemmas.

Readings of articles and passages from texts and literature will be assigned as the basis for discussion and occasional written reflection. In-class video and audio presentations and guest resource persons will be scheduled. A term paper will be required. All assignments will be posted on the school calendar.

A major required resource will be the film by Ken Burns, “The War,” to be shown on the Maine Public Broadcasting Network beginning Sunday, September 23, at 8:00pm. This film is a huge project that deals with most aspects of World War II through the personal accounts of men and women from four American towns. A viewer’s guide to the seven-part series will be given to each student. It will be expected that the entire series be viewed: September 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, October 1, 2—all at 8:00-10:00pm. (Sept. 23, 26 and Oct. 2, are 8-10:30pm). We will devote a great amount of our first month and a half to issues raised in this film.

In order to earn One Credit in Social Studies, one must:

1. Attend each class session on time
2. Complete all assignments for viewing and reading resource material
3. Complete and turn in all written assignments according to our agreed-upon schedule. This applies to revisions necessary for an assignment to be considered complete.
4. Engage actively in the dialogue of each session, and respect the others in this class as members of a learning community.

This course will be a challenging experience for us all. I am grateful to be participating with you in this vital journey. Please let me know of your concerns and questions: ralph@watershedcommunity.org; or 596-0421.