**PHIL 729: Political Philosophy 2**

**Complicity with global injustice**

This course has a special focus on complicity with global injustice.

We currently face many forms of global injustice. As one example consider how much of our contemporary consumption has a tainted production history. Cellphones are produced by exposing workers to toxic substances known to cause high rates of leukemia. Many popular brands of clothing involve child or sweatshop labour. Natural resources such as oil and minerals are necessary ingredients for much production and yet acquiring many of these staples involves trading with some of the most authoritarian and oppressive contemporary governments. These considerations might suggest that ordinary consumers, through their everyday shopping, are complicit in certain injustices. For consumers in high-income countries at least three questions arise about purchases with such tainted histories:

(1). Are we complicit in injustices when we purchase such products?

(2). If we are complicit, is this complicity morally culpable?

(3). If so, what ought we to do to avoid or make amends for morally culpable complicity?

Three important recent books in political philosophy have a bearing on answering these questions and we will read selections from these in this course, along with other materials. The books are:

Chiara Lepora and Robert Goodin *On Complicity and Compromise* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Leif Wenar *Blood Oil: Tyrants, Violence, and the Rules that Run the World* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

Iris Marion Young *Responsibility for Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

The books raise concerns about several kinds of global injustices and these will also feature in our discussions.

**Availability 2017**

Semester 1

**Lecturer(s)**

Coordinator(s) [Professor Gillian **Brock**](http://artsfaculty.auckland.ac.nz/staff/?UPI=gbro064)

**Reading/Texts**

Chiara Lepora and Robert Goodin *On Complicity and Compromise* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Leif Wenar *Blood Oil: Tyrants, Violence, and the Rules that Run the World* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

Iris Marion Young *Responsibility for Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

The books are available through Talis and the bookstore.

**Points**

PHIL 728: 15.0 point or 30 point options available (discussed below).

**Course co-ordinator:** Professor Gillian Brock

**Office location:** Arts 1, Room 458

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**Assessment:**

**Regular 15-point course**:

Option 1: One 6000 word essay worth 100%. (A short critical discussion of a reading is also a requirement of the paper. Failure to do the short presentation attracts a 5% penalty.)

OR

Option 2: One seminar worth 25%, one essay (length: 3000 words) worth 60%, and class contributions worth 15%.

**Tandem Courses (30-point course, PHIL 770-773 for BA (Hons) and PGDip, or PHIL774-777 for MA):**

**Assessment:**

Option 3: One 10 000 word essay worth 100%. (A short critical discussion of a reading is also a requirement of the paper. Failure to do the short presentation attracts a 5% penalty.)

OR

Option 4: One seminar worth 25%, one essay (length: 6000 words) worth 60%, and class contributions worth 15%.

Indicative seminar times for the various options:

Option 1: 10 minutes

Option 2: 20 minutes

Option 3: 20 minutes

Option 4: 40 minutes

Note: Essays are due no later than June 9th at 4pm. Please be sure to e-mail me an electronic copy of your essay.

**Expectations for this course**

There is a difference in what students can be expected to do between undergraduate and graduate-level courses and it is important that these expectations are clearly specified at the beginning of the course. In graduate-level seminars students are expected to do the following:

(1) Attend all classes.

(2) Do the assigned readings for the day. Students should have read and reflected on the readings, and should come to class with comments, useful questions, ideas about how to improve on weaknesses, and so forth. Every student will get a chance to participate.

(3) Do presentations.

All students in the course will be required to present some readings on a particular day. The readings available for selection are marked with a "\*". You should sign up for one of these marked portions. Sign-ups will commence from the first class and proceed on a first-come, first-served basis.

On the day you are presenting your readings you should outline what you take to be the most important points covered in the assigned material, summarise how the arguments work, point out strengths and weaknesses with the arguments, engage in some philosophical discussion, analysis, and so forth. If you can offer constructive suggestions on how to improve on the weaknesses, this would be commendable. It would be good to prepare a one-page (or more, if you like) handout summarising your presentation, which can be handed to everyone in the class.

Note: It is enough to raise interesting questions about the material that begins an important conversation. You don't have to have matters "all figured out" to present a good seminar. It is not good to spend all your time summarising the reading; we are all supposed to have read the material before the class. Rather, the point of the summary is to highlight what you take to be the central points as a starting point for our discussion. Others may want to take up other issues and we can do this after the presenter has finished. DO NOT SPEND MORE THAN HALF YOUR SEMINAR TIME SUMMARISING THE ASSIGNED READING.

In addition, as part of your presentation, you may introduce other material relevant to the issues you are discussing which you have come across from your own independent reflection, research or literature searches. (PhilPapers is a good database if you feel like browsing, as is the Philosopher’s Index.) You don't have to introduce any new material other than the assigned readings, but you certainly may do this, especially if the introduced material helps further the debate in some important way.

Why are student presentations of this kind a good idea?

A basic requirement of a seminar is student participation. This system ensures opportunities for even participation. In addition, this system ensures a higher level of discussion and debate. This system also gives students opportunities to make significant headway on their essays earlier on in the course, since the material you present can form the backbone of your essay topic. You could also see your presentation as an opportunity to get some feedback on the ideas you are planning to argue in your essays.

Though seminars are not formally given marks if you choose the first or third options, how well you do in them can be a factor when students are on the border between two grades. A 5% penalty is imposed if you do not present a seminar.

**Tentative schedule**

Week 1: Wednesday 9th of March

Introduction to the course and some central issues.

Organization and administration

Begin the substantial readings that will be discussed in weeks 2-5.

Week 2: 16th of March

We begin working our way steadily through the first major book for the course, Leif Wenar’s *Blood Oil: Tyrants, Violence, and the Rules that Run the World* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

We will make a good start by covering a fair bit in this session, some material quite briefly and just for completeness, other material in slightly more detail as per below.

Readings:

Leif Wenar’s *Blood Oil: Tyrants, Violence, and the Rules that Run the World* (Oxford University Press, 2016). Parts I and II, pp. ix-132. We focus on pp. 67-132.

\* Available for presentation: Part II, pp. 67-132.

Week 3: 23rd of March

We continue to work our way through Wenar’s influential book.

Readings:

Wenar, *Blood Oil*, Part III, pp. 133-260. We will focus on pp. 190-270.

\* Available for presentation: Part III, just pp. 190-270.

Week 4: 30th of March

We complete Wenar’s influential book.

Readings:

Wenar, *Blood Oil*, Part IV, pp. 261-371. We will focus on pp. 281-334.

\* Available for presentation: Part IV, just pp. 281-334.

Week 5: 6th of April

We cover the second major book, Iris Marion Young *Responsibility for Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Readings:

Iris Marion Young *Responsibility for Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2011). We will focus on Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 95-151, which contains the crux of her well-known view as it applies to the issues we study. You should be sure to read the foreword by Martha Nussbaum as well.

\* Available for presentation: Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 95-151, plus the foreword.

**MID-SEMESTER BREAK**

**EASTER BREAK and APA (no class on 13th of April)**

Week 6: May 4th

We continue our discussion of topics introduced by Iris Marion Young.

We also discuss issues of complicity, compromise, and redress for injustice. We begin our third book, by Lepora and Goodin.

Readings:

Chiara Lepora and Robert Goodin *On Complicity and Compromise* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 1-30

\* Available for presentation: Lepora and Goodin, pp. 1-30.

Week 7: May 11th

We continue with the book by Lepora and Goodin discussing complicity and its conceptual cousins, pp. 31-77.

\* Available for presentation: Lepora and Goodin, pp. 31-77.

Week 8: May 18th

We continue with the book by Lepora and Goodin, discussing responsibility for complicity, along with assessing acts of complicity, pp. 78-129.

\* Available for presentation: Lepora and Goodin, pp. 78-129.

Week 9: May 25th

We conclude the book by Lepora and Goodin, discussing organizational complicity, along with individual complicity and the conclusion, pp. 130-172.

\* Available for presentation: Lepora and Goodin, pp. 130-172.

Week 10: June 1.

We have an opportunity to reflect on all the three books discussed in the course and compare strengths and weaknesses with all the approaches. We also have a chance to reflect on answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the course.

Week 11: June 8

TBD