

# The morality of war argumentative essay examples

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



## **Introduction**

War is an integral part of the human history. It has been justified as the last resort in conflict resolution, when other peaceful conflict resolution methods, fails. However, many times, it may be urged that war has not been used as the last alternative in resolving societal disputes, but has been rather orchestrated by the party(s) that suppose to hold superior militant power, to coerce the weaker side to concede to the demands or conform to its will. That is fact, not withstanding that there are main situation during the recorded history of the mankind, where war may be justified for the ultimate welfare of mankind. Still, the outcomes of such wars do leave an objective observe with many unanswerable questions such as; why then if the if war is an unnecessary evil does it result in further suffering of the most vulnerable members of the society? Why is it that the privileged members of the fighting parties tend or are assumed to benefits from the resulting chaos? Alternatively, even worse, how to whether justify the certain loss of life of the casualties of war for the preservation of the life of others?

These questions transcend cultural norms, religious beliefs and even scholarly arguments. Death, destruction of property and disruption of the normal functioning of individual and society as a whole is the inevitable outcomes of war. Even, in the modern state and with the prevailing advancement in technology, these outcomes cannot be avoided during warfare. The prevailing paradigm is that; there will always collateral damage associated with war. That is, some unintended and unpreventable adverse outcomes will always result from acts of war. War has been there from

prehistoric times. Currently there are numerous wars going on at different frontiers of the world and a realistic observation of the prevailing circumstances are indicative that there are many other wars that humanity will have to face. Therefore, it is important to explore the underlying issues and make an attempt of identifying the pitfalls and benefits that war pose to humanity.

### **Actors in a war situation**

In order to analyze the art of war and identify the pit falls associated with it, it is necessary to recognize that at the prevailing circumstances, war can be between state actor (s), state actor(s) against a non state actor, state actor against not state actor supported by state actor(s) or non state actor against non state actor. The modern state actor is defined by the following attributes; sovereign fixed border , monopolizing use of in maintain law and order, power structures that are impersonal, and legitimacy which is endowed by the people. Non-state actors are characterized by use lack of sovereign border of exercise of authority, use of illegitimate force, personalized power structures and often, but not usually, lack of legitimate authority to rule the people. At the core of any war, there is a struggle to legitimize authority over the individuals within the battle ground and eventually take control over the use of resources and direct the conduct of individuals. That explains why either state or not state actors are so determined to wage war despite the fact that at the end, innocent life and property is lost: provided the outcome justifies the means.

## **Aggression**

It is apparent from the recent wars, particularly in the last decade, that, there are so many interest involved in the ensuing conflict. Hence the ultimate fight is mainly the ultimate failure of the competing actors to resolving their conflict in more civilized manner without resulting to force. It can be urged that the strong actors are often the aggressors. However, a critical analysis of the various conflicts that have resulted into war, points that, even those parties that may be caused weak in military or fighting capability, have also played aggressive roles which resulted in a vicious war as the strong forces retaliate. In other circumstances, both the strong and weak parties to a conflict have used proxies to escalate conflicts, which would have otherwise solved without war. this has resulted into all out battle, with the aim of either attracting international attention to side with their interest or to justify the use of excessive force, especial for actors with superior military power, to achieve desired outcomes.

Aggressor in a war as defined by the United Nation or the non-state actor who uses armed force against another. This definition has been faulted in that, there are actions that may not necessarily be involve the use of the armed force that constitute an act of aggression. For instance, disrupting the flow of the water of the river Nile is considered by the Egypt as an act of war, which may necessitate the use of armed force as a reiteration. Another case is the ongoing cyber crime, which target strategic installations. The state or non-state actor initiating such activities may urge that any armed retaliation is an act of aggression. This may be taken to be wrong according to international law, however it may be morally or ethically right for the

concerned party to respond in such a manner.

Apparently, aggression is a core issue in the debate about the morality and ethics of war. It is ethically and morally wrong to be the initiator of aggressive acts that result in war. There is no virtue justification for aggression; be it political, economical, religious or political. It is universally accepted that acquisition of territory or any other attainment of special advantages, which is a product of aggressive tendencies, is unlawful and immoral. However, this belief system has given rise to opportunists who pursue sinister agendas against others claim protection from war by the international community. Such cases, have been witnessed throughout the world where guerrillas and religious fantasists have posed as victims of government or international state authorities aggressions, while in fact, they are pursuing immoral agendas such as violating the basic human rights and freedoms. Therefore, the justification of condemnation of war should stretch further beyond aggression, into the underlying intents and observable or projected outcomes.

## **Justification of war**

Although, war is a sign of a systematic failure of reasonable challenge of resolving communal or national disputes, it is in many ways the only plausible means of achieving certain outcomes, which are critical for the survival of a state or even a community. To begin with, every state: which is the organization of the modern society, has a moral obligation to protect its citizen (Israel, 1). This involves suppressing any internal or external forces that aim to disrupt political and economic interests of different

governments, and social order. This function is bestowed to the armed forces of the state. With respect to this, state is justified to start a war with either state or non state actor as long as they act in a manner that compromises the above stated welfare. This is one of the justifications of most past and ongoing wars waged by the nations of the world.

After what the terror attack on the United States of America, on September 11th 2001, there was justification for the country to engage those involved in war (Flint, and Falah, 1386). As a result, American together with the coalition forces waged war on Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan with the sole aim of suppressing the forces that were behind the maiming of innocent civilians as well as the destruction of property that was caused by an attack. This act of war was in way a means of deterring others with the same intent from engaging from such aggressive acts. That explains why so much force has been used so far: to be a lesson to others that the same consequences will follow and a result detest such actions. The United States has upheld its duty to protect the citizens and their way of life.

Another justification of war is maintenance of world peace and order. The international community may wage war against any state or a group of state, which have the intention of acting or acts in a manner that threaten the world peace (Fabre, 996). This is one of the why reasons why the allied forces fought German Nazi. It is the same reason why the NATO forces attacked Iraq during the " operation desert storm", to deter it from attacking neighboring countries that had weak military ability. Again Iraq was attacked by American with its allies to prevent proliferation of chemical and biological weapons which were aimed at disrupting the world peace. Right, now Israel

is also pushing for war against Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons, which could be used to destroy it and other western country targets. All these wars are justified by the morality of maintaining world peace and order.

### **The pitfalls of war**

The ethics of war, dictates that in the pursuit of maintain peace and order, all efforts must be made to reduce lose of innocent civilians or the wanton destruction of civilian installations such as hospitals, religious worshipping places such as mosques, churches and temples. However, as history has shown, in almost all wars it is difficult to avoid death of civilians as well as disruption of their social, economic and political institutions. This is more profound especially when engaging in unconventional warfare: war between state actors and non state actors. This has been cited as one of the main arguments against the morals war as a means of maintaining peace or protecting the interests of the state. It has been urged, that more often, it is the most vulnerable individuals who suffer most on both sides of the warring factions (Kamm, 652). More so, some wars do not achieve the intended purpose such as bringing peace but leave a legacy of hatred, mistrust and destitution far worse than the prevailing circumstances before the war. A major case in point is the aftermath of the Iraq war, whereby the social order has been permanently disrupted since the beginning of the war and even now, as the foreign forces withdraws, the security situation and civil disobedience has escalated into to far much worse than before the war. However, it is worth noting that, this sometimes, is the price that has to be

paid for the greater good of the society. In addition, there has been concerted effort by the international community to restore order and rebuild the state of Iraq, and mostly, the elements that continue to create discord are those who are allied to the disposed leader and would like to perpetuate the dictatorial leadership and violation of basic human rights and justice.

### **Works cited**

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