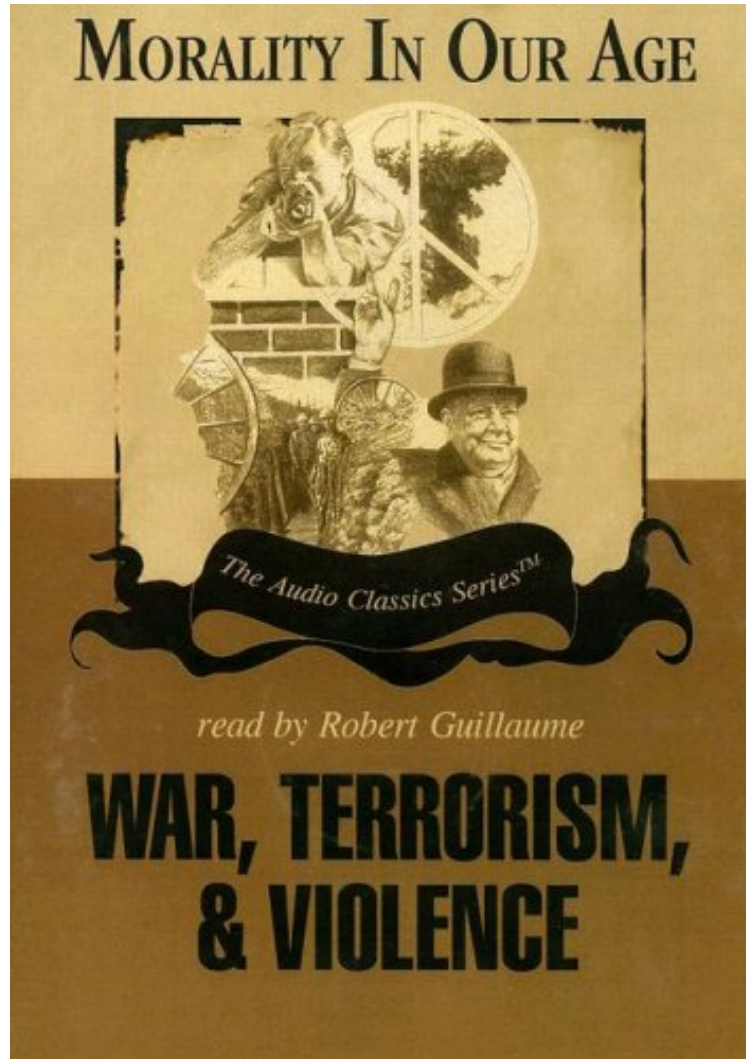


(Download) War, Terrorism, and Violence (Morality in Our Age)

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Nicholas Fotion

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Nicholas Fotion : War, Terrorism, and Violence (Morality in Our Age) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised War, Terrorism, and Violence (Morality in Our Age):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Not bad, but has limitations By Camber This audio presentation deals mainly with the moral dimensions of "war, terrorism, and violence," but the title is misleading because terrorism is only very briefly discussed near the end of the presentation, and there's no separate discussion of violence, so the focus is squarely on war. The presentation describes the three primary moral positions on war, namely realism and pacifism at the extremes, and just war theory in the middle. The topic is important since it forces moral theory to grapple with one of the ugliest aspects of human behavior, and yet an aspect which has been pervasive throughout human history. The realist position basically asserts that "anything goes" in order to pursue self-interest. This Machiavellian

attitude is nonmoral at best and immoral at worst (I think closer to the latter), and is associated with power politics. It rests on a fairly pessimistic view of human nature and human potential which lacks a sense of universally shared humanity. The pacifist position is laudably idealistic in condemning all war as immoral, and I think it's worth striving for a world order which implements the pacifist ideal. But, meanwhile, I think it's hard to argue that people can't or shouldn't fight in self-defense if they'll otherwise be killed by an unjust attacker. It's true that leaders like Gandhi and Martin Luther King achieved major results through nonviolent resistance, but that was in the context of societies which at least had a self-image of civility and human rights (and remember that both of these dear men were assassinated!). Such pacifist approaches would surely be suicidal against ruthless people like Genghis Khan and Hitler (and many others in our midst today). So the just war position seems to find a reasonable balance, and it has two aspects: just cause for entering into war, and just conduct of war. An issue the presentation doesn't really address is the seeming contradiction between being engaged in war (with obvious violent intent), yet exercising restraint in attacking the opponent (eg, avoiding noncombatant targets and not using WMDs). I can think of a few possible explanations which might resolve this apparent contradiction: (a) Being excessively ruthless may eventually lead to retaliation in-kind if the opponent gets that opportunity in the future. (b) Excessive ruthlessness may be frowned upon by bystander societies, thus jeopardizing relationships with them in the future. (c) Rather than destroying the opponent, the intent may be to dominate and thus obtain submission of the opponent, possibly to resolve a dispute which wasn't resolved by nonviolent means such as diplomacy. This reminds me of how many animals fight to establish dominance (eg, alpha males), but they clearly exercise restraint in their fighting so that neither animal is badly injured or killed. To the extent that this is a reason why humans go to war, I think that reflects poorly on us. Surely our intellect and culture should enable us to rise above the beasts? (d) Most of us, at least some of the time, indeed have a sense that excessive force is immoral. Regarding other limitations of the presentation, I would have preferred more discussion about the history of war throughout human history, so that we could see war in a broader context which reveals both its diversity and common elements. I also didn't care for the narration by Robert Guillaume which, for this subject matter, I found to be overzealous to the point of sometimes sounding comical and usually annoying. But, overall, I can still recommend this presentation to people interested in examining the moral dimensions of war. It's only an introduction in that regard, but it's a decent introduction.

Original material by Dr. Nicholas Fotion, Edited by Professor John Lachs and Mike Hassel, Produced by Pat Childs
Some think that humans are naturally aggressive and that wars are unavoidable; others believe that morality demands a pacifist condemnation of all forms of violence. A large middle ground involves the attempt to define just wars, and rules have been written to govern how war should be conducted among civilized peoples. Is war ever justified? Is aggression or is the threat of force an appropriate diplomatic tool? If nuclear war would be a catastrophe, are we morally obligated to avoid it at all costs? The *Morality in Our Age* series examines the historical and philosophical background of today's most pressing moral challenges. Here the realities of money, sex, power, and violence meet the ideals of responsibility, integrity, and moral well-being. Though a final answer is notoriously elusive in moral discussion, you'll develop a much better insight into the forces and principles at play on today's most serious moral issues, problems, and dilemmas.

About the Author
Dr. Nick Fotion is professor of philosophy at Emory University. He received his PhD from the University of North Carolina and is the author of *War and Ethics: A New Just War Theory* and *Moral Situations and Military Ethics: Looking Toward the Future*. Robert Guillaume is a versatile and Emmy(R) Award-winning actor whose career exemplifies applied intelligence, character, and hard work. His belief in the fundamental importance of education underlies his commitment and successes as a musical, dramatic, and comedic performer. John Lachs is Centennial Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University. A recipient of the Herbert Schneider Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Philosophy, he is the author of *Intermediate Man*, *In Love with Life, Mind and Philosophers*, and *A Community of Individuals*, among others.