

Roosevelt De-Cal 10/10/07

What makes a good op-ed:

- claims explained
- facts support the argument
- more than just a rant / not too personal
- solutions offered, not just problems
- effective metaphors
- counterargument is not too strong
- moves from specific to general / uses examples judiciously
- includes opinions of professionals
- uses credible sources (but shouldn't cite them)
- catchy title

Prof. Zook's talk: U.S. National Security, International Law, and the War on Terror

-Not everything Bush does is illegal: There are lots of loopholes and weaknesses in international law.

-U.N. Charter general security guidelines: Article 2(4) - use no force and no threat of force, generally; Article 2(7) - non-interference; Article 51- self-defense is okay if it is necessary and proportional. These only apply to U.N. members.

-Constraints: human rights treaties, international humanitarian law (Geneva Convention), other weapons treaties (land mines, nuclear weapons, chemical and biological weapons)

-Problems with the war on terror: no official declaration, no definitive end, non-state actors, terrorism is inherently illegal.

-There is no U.N. definition of "terrorism."

-Domestic security: Department of Homeland Security, USA PATRIOT Act (It's an acronym!), detainees and illegal combatants

-Military tribunals were established in November of 2001 through an Executive Order, based on the need for secrecy when dealing with matters of intelligence. Secrecy is, after all, not illegal. The tribunals do violate the Geneva Convention because detainees are supposed to have P.O.W. status until a competent judicial tribunal (like the Supreme Court) decides otherwise.

-Terror is an international struggle, akin to piracy.

-Idea of moving from national security to human security

-There is an absence of global institutions with enforcement capability or institutional cohesion, which raises the problem of how to try terrorists as international criminals.

-The ideas of sovereignty and the nation-state are problematized in the new internationalism.

-The difference between South African apartheid (where the U.N. intervened) and Burma (where they won't) is that apartheid is state-sponsored racism, which is considered a crime against humanity. Burma is operating domestically, and can defend their actions by claiming to be a government trying to keep the peace. (Op-ed)

-Issue of whether to declare the Turkish massacre of Armenians a "genocide": Could it be blamed on the no-longer existing Ottoman Empire instead of modern Turkey? Should it? (Op-ed)

-There is a need for a definition of "aggression" because of the war on terror: Bush has claimed that acting pre-emptively is okay as long as there is a threat of aggression. (Op-ed)