

# Literature & the Law of War



**Birkhold**

**Mondays 1:00 – 3:30PM**

**Hagerty 488**

In this course, we will explore the relationship between literature and the international law of war. Despite its universal application, this law is beleaguered by ambiguities. If the law attempts to solve ambiguities by looking to case studies, how does literature supplement – and interrogate – this method? In addition to examining literary depictions of war, we will investigate the exchange of narrative forms and rhetorical figures between literary and juridical representations of the proper conduct of war. How has literary fiction engendered new interpretations of the international law of war?

Together we'll closely read a range of literary texts (including Shakespeare, Goethe, Kleist, Tolstoy), legal decisions, military manuals, and theoretical works. And we'll study a number of cases, from torture in the 30 Years' War to contemporary drone strikes.

*All readings will be available in English and German.*