

2024 BARNES SYMPOSIUM

‘UNDOING THE FOLDED LIE’: Mapping Responsibilities and Memories in Law at War

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Today’s wars among state and non-state actors have returned our attention to questions from the last century – “Who is responsible? Who takes responsibility?” At the opening of this century, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty declared that state sovereignty was no longer a matter of mere violent force or power, but instead established upon a state a “responsibility to protect” vulnerable populations from the horrors of atrocity crimes. As recent international conflicts, internal security crackdowns, security mobilizations in borderlands, and non-state armed conflicts unfold, however, the question of state responsibility remains unanswered, with some declaring any “responsibility to protect” a lie. What futures await the responsibility to protect, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law? Why are national governments and international organizations ever more resistant to claiming responsibility over internally displaced persons, humanitarian camps, commitments to rebuild post-conflict, and addressing climate change?

Engaging debates over state sovereignty and responsibility spanning the classical arguments of Thucydides, critical twentieth-century interventions into responsibility and judgment by Hannah Arendt, the questions of encampment raised by Giorgio Agamben, and debates of just and unjust wars found within Christian and Islamic traditions, this symposium will unfold what remains amid the ruins of the “responsibility to protect” and will examine what it will mean to “take responsibility” for wars and conflict in the near future.



Dr. French is an associate professor of comparative religion at Miami University. He is the author of *And God Knows the Martyrs: Martyrdom and Violence in Jihadi-Salafism* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

**Thursday
March
21**

**Close-Hipp, 8th Floor
6:00pm**

The *Rudolph C. Barnes Sr. Symposium* honors its namesake’s interests and engagement through an annual program examining problems of law and morality understood in the broadest sense. The Barnes family has made the event possible through a generous endowment in his memory.



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