***Chapter 6: The Case of Park 51***

1. The current state of the matter, drawn from Wikipedia:

On September 21, 2011, Park51 was opened to the public as 4,000 square feet of renovated space in the Burlington Coat Factory building hoping to replace the building "in several years time". Visitors were able to view 160 portraits of immigrant children living in New York during the exhibit called "NYChildren",and a modest carpeted prayer room is located in the lower level.

In August 2011, *The New York Times* reported that Sharif El-Gamal, the project's developer, is quietly proceeding with efforts to move Park51 forward, embracing a "slower, more deliberate and more realistic approach" than before. However, in April 2014, Sharif El-Gamal announced his plans to demolish the current building and replace it with a 3-story museum of Islamic culture. He hired French architect [Jean Nouvel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Nouvel).

In late August 2014, the *Times* announced that there will instead be a 3-story Islamic museum with an included prayer space, as well as condos, at 49-51 Park Place, and that [Con Edison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Con_Edison) had sold the current 49-51 Park Place building for $10.7 million, by [Sharif El-Gamal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharif_El-Gamal), chief executive of Soho Properties. The buildings on the two lots have not been torn down yet, however.

1. Is there a right to construct the Islamic center? Is it wise to do so? See “[Catholics, Muslims and the Mosque](https://www3.nd.edu/~pweithma/contemporary_political_philosophy/Discussion%20Questions/Nussbaum/Appleby%20and%20McGreevy%20%28Catholics%2C%20Muslims%2C%20and%20the%20Mosque%29.pdf)”.
	1. Does the offense to which an act gives rise trump the right to do it? Consider with respect to Park51 and the right of Nazi’s to march in in the Chicago suburb of Skokie, IL.
	2. What does Mill mean by a “purely constructive injury” (p. 202) and how is it relevant here?
	3. Was Obama’s statement on the matter really so unclear?
2. What of the point made on p. 220-21 that minorities are subject to constant scrutiny, and need always to worry about giving offense – majorities “define what normal is”?
3. Note the reference to the “rational basis test” on p. 222. How does this differ from the test the Religious Freedom Restoration Act applies to laws which substantially burden the exercise of religious liberty?
4. Nussbaum’s argument to the effect that “Europe urgently needs to engage in a deep and searching debate about equality and what equal respect for citizens entails in the area of religion.” (p. 223)
5. Discuss the parallel between the “ground zero mosque” and the Carmelite monastery at Auschwitz. If the former can be built, why not the latter?
	1. In order to communicate the uniqueness of the Holocaust, should Auschwitz be thought of as just a Jewish site, or is it legitimate to commemorate the Christians who died there also?
	2. What if the Carmelites said that in a Catholic country, it is legitimate for representatives of the dominant and recognized religion to offer prayers for all who died at Auschwitz?

***Chapter 7: Overcoming the Politics of Fear***

1. On p. 241, Nussbaum implies that what she calls “modern Socratism” requires conversation with a wide range of people. Is Notre Dame diverse enough to provide the range that Socratism requires?
2. Note the passage from p. 241 to p. 242. How would Finnis respond to what Nussbaum says here? Who do you think is right?
3. What is Nussbaum’s argument for the claim that we need “the third thing that Socrates lacked: a curious imagination”? Is she right about this? If so, how would we cultivate such an imagination?
4. Is Nussbaum right to say at p. 244 that “our time is truly dangerous”? What does she mean by this?