

Theories of Conflict, Violence and War
SIS-610-002 / SIS-610-001
Spring 2008, Tuesdays 8:10-10:40 pm / Thursdays 5:30-8 pm

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Why do warfare and mass violence occur? Which theories best explain why interstate wars happen? Why civil wars take place? Why genocide or wartime rape occur? Resolving conflict and building peace require understanding why mass organized violence occurs.

This course sets forth the main theoretical frameworks, with empirical examples, for understanding the causes and conditions of violent conflict. It examines organized violence at four levels: the global system; the state or regime; social/ethnic groups; and the individual. By the end of the course you should know the main approaches to understanding what violence is, why warfare and violence occur, and how to apply those approaches to concrete cases.

More concretely, my goals for this course are as follows:

First, I hope you will learn how to think theoretically about warfare and mass political violence, using a variety of perspectives to explain the same set of events. At the end of this course, you should be able to think creatively and flexibly, escaping the intellectual straitjackets that often mark analyses of the topic.

Second, I intend to acquaint you with some key questions regarding war and violence in international relations. Has armed conflict changed since the Cold War? Since 9/11? Why do countries go to war? What explains the greater share of civil wars? Is warfare an inevitable byproduct of state-formation? State decay? How do individuals' beliefs and actions explain violent social conflict? Does democratization prevent or cause violent conflict? Why does political rape occur in some wars but not others? Is there some formula for minority representation that can prevent genocide or warfare?

Finally, I want you to improve your analytic skills. You should emerge from the course a more critical and analytic reader of texts. Your capacity to write analytically and persuasively should also improve. Finally, your ability to prepare for, carry out and evaluate oral presentations should also improve.

Three Required Books Available at the Bookstore:

- (1) Richard K. Betts, *Conflict after the Cold War*, 3rd edition (NY: Pearson/Longman, 2007).
- (2) Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (NY: WW Norton, 2007).
- (3) Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower: A Story of Community, Courage and War*. 2006.

Course Requirements

10%: Performance in One Oral Presentation
 60%: Four four-page Reading Reviews
 30%: Final Exam
 Marginal difference: Participation in classroom discussions

Readings: Do all of the assigned readings. Otherwise, it will be difficult for you to participate, and you won't get as much out of the discussion. Through Blackboard, the articles and all readings should be available electronically, except for the Betts text, *Conflict after the Cold War*, which is available for purchase at the bookstore. Please read the articles in the order presented below, as I've arranged them with a certain logic in mind.

10%: Oral Presentation to Stimulate Discussion. Each student will be expected to team up with a classmate to make a single oral presentation at the beginning of class. The purpose of the presentations is to stimulate discussion through analytic points and questions based on the issues raised by the week's readings. The presentation should NOT summarize the readings! (regurgitation results in an automatic "C".) Instead they should indicate some combination of: the most important findings, points of divergence and convergence, relation to theories or arguments found earlier in the course, assessment of how compelling the arguments were, weaknesses in the argument, and/or reasons why a reading is useful for shaping how we look at conflict/peace. Each presentation should include 3 questions for class discussion. On Week 2, you will all sign up for the weeks of your choice (please bring back-up preferences). Each presentation cannot exceed 7 minutes (per person).

Marginal grade: Participation. Attendance is mandatory, and class participation is important. If you wish assistance in enhancing your participation, please let me know. More than one absence or lack of participation in classroom discussions will lower your grade by up to one letter grade. Conversely, quality participation will boost your grade. Unless your case is unusual, then this will make a difference if your grade is on a borderline.

60%: Four Weekly Reading Reviews. Every 2-3 weeks, a Reading Review is due from each student. **The review will cover at least three of the readings assigned for a particular week (unless the review covers an entire book or there are fewer than 3 readings assigned).** Your review will be graded for its substantive points and for its clarity, persuasiveness and artfulness, as well as for being on time. The paper should be no more than 4 pages long, double-spaced (Times Roman, 12-pt font, normal margins). You should provide a brief (no more than 3-4 sentences) of the MAIN argument or point the author is trying to make – his or her ultimate agenda. In the rest of the reaction piece, you should make comments about the significance and persuasiveness of the readings, placing them in a broader context if possible..

You should e-mail YourName Review #X as an attachment in Word (format: Firstname Lastname Review #1.doc -- # refers to sequence of your papers, not week reviewed) to me (call@american.edu) by NOON on the day before the class in which the readings will be discussed. These must also be posted on the Blackboard Discussion Board. Late reviews will be downgraded by 1/3 letter-grade (e.g., B+ to B) if submitted between 12:05 and 2 pm, and a full letter-grade if submitted after then but before 5 pm. See my website for more specific guidance on writing critically, and I am happy to provide more guidance if needed.

30%: Final Exam. This class has a **REQUIRED 48-hour take-home final exam from Tues-Thurs, 6-8 May 2008.** The exam will consist of 2-3 essay questions that allow you to demonstrate your ability to analyze and apply the theories of the entire course. The exam will be sent at 7 am on Tuesday, due in by 7 am on Thursday. Late exams will be downgraded by 1/3 letter-grade (e.g., B+ to B) if submitted between 7:05 and 10 am, and a full letter-grade if submitted after then but before 6 p.m. After then, but before 6 a.m. the next day, a second full letter grade off. No exams will be accepted after that hour.

INTRODUCTION

Week 1 (Jan. 15/17) Introduction to the Seminar

- Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” Betts Text, pp. 33-50.
- Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” Betts Text, pp. 5-16.

Week 2 (Jan. 22/24) Overview. Has War Changed? Levels of Analysis: How useful?

- Richard K. Betts, “Preface,” Betts Text, pp. ix-x. (very brief)
- Jack S. Levy, “Theories of Interstate and Intrastate War: A Levels-of-Analysis Approach,” in Chester Crocker et al, *Turbulent Peace*, (USIP Press), pp. 3-27.
- Robert Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994.
- Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel Report on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, “Synopsis” of the Entire Report (no para numbers), plus all of Part I (para. 1-43). (hereafter “HLP Report”) (UN website, or www.globalpolicy.org/reform/initiatives/panels/high/1202report.pdf).
- Lotta Harbom, Stina Hogbladh & Peter Wallensteen, “Armed Conflict and Peace Agreements,” *Journal of Peace Research* 43,5 (2006), pp. 617-631.

*** Review #1 covers Weeks 2, 3 or 4. Due by noon the day before the class when reviewed readings will be discussed (e.g., Monday before Tues class; Wed before Thursday class). By noon! (penalty if more than 5 mins late)*

I. THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Week 3 (Jan. 29/31) Individual-level factors?: Suicide Attacks

- Robert A. Pape, the following chapters in *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005),
 - Chapter 2, “Explaining Suicide Terrorism,” pp. 8-26.
 - Chapter 6, “Occupation and Religious Difference,” pp. 79-101.
 - Chapter 9, “Altruism and Terrorism,” pp. 171-198.
 - Chapter 10, “The Demographic Profile of Terrorists,” pp. 199-216.
- Mia Bloom, “Chapter 7. Feminism, Rape and War: Engendering Suicide Terror?,” in her *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (NYC: Columbia Univ Press, 2005), pp. 142-165.
- Ghassan Hage, “‘Comes a Times We are all Enthusiasm’: Explaining Palestinian Suicide Bombers in Times of Exiphobia,” *Public Culture* 15(1), 65-89 (2003).
- Aatish Taseer, “A British Jihadist,” *Prospect* (August 2005). p. 113.
- Crenshaw, Martha (2002) “The Causes of Terrorism” in Violence: A Reader.

Week 4 (Feb. 5/7) War & Mass Killing due to Individual & Psychocultural Factors

- Stanley Milgram, in Betts text, pp. 184-190, “The Perils of Obedience” excerpted from his *Obedience to Authority : An Experimental View* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).
- Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (NY: WW Norton, 2007).

II. THE SOCIAL LEVEL

Week 5 (Feb. 12/14) War Due to Ethnic Hatred, Fear and Manipulation

- Stathis Kalyvas, “Pathologies,” in *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 32-51.
- Donald L. Horowitz, “Structure and Strategy in Ethnic Conflict,” (April 1998), paper presented at the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, Washington, DC. ONLY abstract and pp. 1-13 required.

- V.P. Gagnon, “Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia,” *International Security* 19, 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 130-166.
- Amy Chua, *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Markets and Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability* (New York: Doubleday, 2002). “Introduction” and Chapters 6 (“Backlash against Democracy”) & 7 (“Backlash against Market-Dominant Minorities”). Pp. 1-17; 147-175.

** Review #2 covers Weeks 5, 6, or 7. Due by noon the day before the relevant class when reviewed readings will be discussed (penalty if more than 5 mins late)!

Week 6 (Feb. 19/21) War due to Greed

- Paul Collier, “Doing Well Out of War,” in Mats Berdal and David M. Malone (eds), *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 91-111.
- Michael L. Ross, “Oil, Drugs and Diamonds: The Varying Roles of Natural Resources in Civil War,” in Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman (eds), *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner and IPA, 2003), pp. 47-72.
- Karen Ballentine, “Conclusions”, in Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman (eds), *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner and IPA, 2003), pp. 259-283.
- Michael Pugh and Neil Cooper, “The Regional Dimensions of Civil War Economies,” Chapter 2 in their *War Economies in Regional Context*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner & IPA, 2004), pp. 17-44.

Week 7 (Feb. 26/28) Explaining Gendered Political Violence

- Lisa Sharlach, “State Rape: Sexual Violence as Genocide” in Kenton Worcester, *et al.* (eds.) *Violence and Politics: Globalization’s Paradox*, Routledge. 2002.
- Jean Franco, “Rape: A Weapon of War,” *Social Text* 91 (25,2) Summer 2007, 23-38.
- Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Sexual Violence during War: Explaining Variation,” Paper presented at Yale University conference on Order, Conflict and Violence, 30 April-1 May 2004, New Haven, CT.

III. THE STATE / REGIME LEVEL

Week 8 (Mar. 4/6) War due to State Failure

- Ulric Shannon, "Private Armies and the Decline of the State," in Kenton Worcester, *et al.* (eds.) *Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox*, Routledge. 2002.
- Kalevi Holsti, Preface and Chapters 1, 2 & 6, in his *The State, War and the State of War* (New York: Cambridge Univ Press, 1996), pp. xi-xiv, 1-40, 89-122.
- Robert I. Rotberg, "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States" Chapter One in his *When States Fail* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 1-30 only (you may read the rest of the chapter if you wish).
- Charles T. Call, "The Fallacy of the Failed State". Paper presented at International Studies Assoc. conference, March 2006.

** Review #3 covers Weeks 8 or 9. Due by noon the day before the class when reviewed readings will be discussed.

SPRING BREAK (Mar. 10-14). NO CLASS

Week 9 (Mar. 18/20) War & Mass Killings due to Regime Type: The Democratic Peace Thesis

- Rudolph J. Rummel, "Power, Genocide and Mass Murder," *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 1 (February 1994), 1-10.
- James Lee Ray, "Does Democracy Cause Peace?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 1998:1, 27-46.
- Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," in Betts Text, pp. 291-306.
- Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace," in *International Security*, 19,2 (Fall 1994), pp. 5-49.
- Edward D Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratic Transitions and War: From Napoleon to the Millenium's End," *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 113-126.

Tuesday/Thursday, Mar. 25/27: NO CLASS!!! (Int'l Studies Association Conference)

IV. THE SYSTEMIC LEVEL

Week 10 (Apr. 1/3) Realism: War due to International Anarchy

- Betts Intro to Part II, Text, pp. 51-53.
- Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," Betts Text, pp. 55-59.
- Niccolo Machiavelli, "Doing Evil in Order to Do Good," Betts Text, pp. 60-65.
- Thomas Hobbes, "The State of Nature and the State of War," pp. 65-68.
- Kenneth Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neo-Realist Thought," Betts text, pp. 86-92.

*** Review #4 covers Weeks 10, 11 or 12. Due by noon the day before the class when reviewed readings will be discussed.*

Week 11 (Apr. 8/10) War as Unnecessary: Liberal & Constructivist Critics of Realism

- Betts Intro to Part III, pp. 117-119.

Neoliberal Institutionalism & Liberalism:

- Robert Keohane & Joseph S. Nye, "Power and Interdependence" in Betts Text, pp. 139-145 [Neo-liberal Institutionalism]
- Andrew Moravchik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization*, Autumn 1997, pp. 513-54. [Liberalism]

Constructivism:

- Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2001 Vol. 4, pp. 391-416.
- John Mueller, "The Obsolescence of Major War," Betts Text, pp. 146-158.
- Margaret Mead, "War is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity," Betts Text, pp. 176-180.

Week 12 (Apr. 15/17) War due to Economic or Political Domination: Empire & Hegemony

- Johan Galtung. 1971. "A Structural Theory of Imperialism". *Journal of Peace Research*. 13:81 (selected pages on Blackboard).
- Robert Gilpin, "Hegemonic War and International Change," Betts Text, pp. 93-104.
- Michael Ignatieff, "Who are Americans to Think Freedom is Theirs to Spread?," *New York Times Magazine* (July 2005), pp. 42-47.

- Mark Duffield, “The Merging of Development and Security” in *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security*, (Zed Books, 2001).
- Recommended Reading: V.I. Lenin, “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,” Betts Text, pp. 236-242.

CLOSING CASE STUDIES

Week 13 (Apr. 22/24) Explaining Rwanda’s Genocide

- African Rights, *Death, Despair and Defiance* (London: African Rights, 1995), Executive Summary, pp. xviii-xxxiii).
- Mahmoud Mamdani, “Preface and Acknowledgements,” “Introduction” and “Chapter 1. Defining Post-Colonial Citizenship,” (pp. xi-xvi, 2-39) in his *When Victims Become Killers* (Princeton, 2002).
- Rene Lemarchand, “Exclusion, Marginalization and Political Mobilization: The Road to Hell in the Great Lakes,” in Andreas Wimmer et al (eds) *Facing Ethnic Conflicts* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 61-77.
- Samantha Power, (2001) "Bystanders to Genocide," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 288, No. 2 (Jan.), pp. 84-108.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2001/09/power.htm>

Week 14 (Apr. 29/May 1) Explaining King Phillip’s War in the American Colonies

- Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower: A Story of Community, Courage and War* 2006.
 - Read the entire book, but concentrate especially on the last (third and longest) section called “War”, which details King Philip’s War, which will be the main subject of our discussions.

May 6-8, 2008 TAKE-HOME 48-HOUR FINAL EXAM
Tuesday 7 am – Thursday 7 am