

# WAR, PEACE, AND STRATEGY

Class: Mondays and Wednesdays 11:40-12:55.

Betts Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30-5:00, or by appointment.

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Questions animating this course include: Why is force used in international politics? What causes peace? How do wars, or competitions shaped by the possibility of war, affect international relations and national societies? How can governments best prepare to prevent wars or to win them if they occur? By what standards should resort to force, or strategic and tactical choices in combat, be judged legitimate or immoral? How are the prevention, outbreaks, processes, and outcomes of mass violence (or crises resolved short of combat) determined by politics, ideology, diplomacy, technology, economics, geography, military plans and tactics, intelligence, or arms control? What are similarities and differences among conflicts between states, within states, and between states and transnational groups (such as terrorists)? How important is terrorism? How do weapons of mass destruction coerce or deter? Is the world safer or more dangerous after the Cold War? Can war be made obsolete? The course emphasizes problems in the relation between political ends and military means. Students must grapple with the terms of reference in both dimensions. The course is organized thematically, not by cases, but illustrative examples are drawn from conflicts in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The course emphasizes issues in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and in U.S. national security policy.

**Requirements:** This is a graduate course open to advanced undergraduates. *Consider the alert on p. 15.* Any who do not wish to read and ponder a heavy load of material, or to accept the following rules, should not take the course. Students must (1) complete assigned readings (pp. 2-14 below, items in boldface type); (2) attend all lectures, seated on time (NLT 11:40); (3) view three films; (4) take the mid-term examination; (5) take the final examination on the scheduled date (*make-up exams will not be allowed except for documented medical excuse or family emergency*). Undergraduates must also attend discussion sections (optional but strongly recommended for graduate students). **NB: Multi-tasking is not allowed in class** (see p. 16). **Laptops may be used only for taking notes** (although you should be aware that studies reportedly have shown that students who take notes by handwriting retain more and perform better). **Use of phones, other electronic devices, or any connection to the Internet during class is prohibited.** Students found checking e-mail, surfing the Internet, text-messaging, or otherwise violating the prohibition will leave the class. At examinations, students must leave all electronic devices except battery-powered watches outside the examination room.

To allow maximum reading time no paper is assigned. Required reading **averages 186 pages per week**, but is concentrated disproportionately in sections 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9. To help you plan reading time, and which books you want to buy, the numbers of pages in each item and for each section of the syllabus are noted in brackets. The **required reading totals 2,606 pages**. Books from which large portions are assigned are ordered in the College Bookstore and if you can afford should be purchased so you can mark them up. Students may choose to do reading in the library or on a computer, but will then have a harder time taking notes. Students who do the reading without marking/annotating or taking notes are foolish unless they have photographic memories and superhuman capabilities for mentally retaining a complex array of specific concepts, arguments, and historical examples.

Columbia students come from a wide variety of countries and educational systems. Whatever your background, understand that the purpose of this course is education (teaching *how to think*), not training (teaching *what to do*). The aim is not to indoctrinate you with what the instructor believes to be the right answers, but to highlight important questions and ideas and expose you to the main currents of debate about them. Performance on examinations is judged by how well you understand concepts, issues, debates, and relevant evidence, and how thoroughly and appropriately you exploit readings and lectures in constructing answers.

*"Experience may well be the best teacher, but the tuition is very high."*

--- Burton G. Malkiel and Charles D. Ellis,  
*The Elements of Investing*

## 1. **Introduction: Nature and Functions of War**

[ 139 pages total ]

*Visions of Conflict: Does War Have a Future?*  
*Concepts of National Security and Philosophy of War*  
*Political Ends and Military Means: Rationality*  
*War is Hell: Insanity and Obscenity*  
*The Perspective Between Pacifism and Militarism*

**Richard K. Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War*, 4th Edition (Pearson, 2013) :**

[60]

**Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History"**

**John J. Mearsheimer, "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War"**

**Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?"**

**Fareed Zakaria, "Economics Trumps Politics"**

- What are the essential differences in these visions?
- What are their assumptions about causes and effects in international politics?
- Should we draw lessons from the past to predict the future? If so, which competing lessons are the best? If not, on what basis can we forecast?
- What developments would validate or discredit any of these theories or their implicit predictions? Which is most and least convincing? Why (for what reasons *other than* that you like or hate the argument instinctively)?

**Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans. (Princeton University Press, 1976):** Book I, chaps. 1, 2

[24]

(NB: Only an unabridged German language edition is an acceptable alternative to this translation. *Especially do not read the widely available Penguin edition of the Graham translation abridged by Anatol Rapoport.*)

Consider the following questions rationally and empirically, apart from the more important question of whether and why war is ever morally justified:

- What is the nature of war?
- Which are Clausewitz's main concepts?
- What is the purpose of war?
- What is the relationship between the ends and means of war?
- What does Clausewitz mean when he says that "Combat is the only effective force in war"?
- When does he believe "the object must be renounced and peace must follow"? How often do statesmen heed this advice?

**Sun-Tzu, *The Art of Warfare*, Roger Ames, trans. (Ballantine, 1993),** chaps. 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11

[25]

(The Sawyer, Griffith, Mair, or Huang translations are also acceptable.)

- What are the main apparent differences between Sun Tzu (Sun Zi) and Clausewitz?
- Which of these two basic approaches to the functions of war makes more sense?
- What differences in their situations and concerns when they wrote might explain the differences in their arguments?
- Can the apparent differences between the two be reconciled?

**Paul Fussell, *Wartime* (Oxford University Press, 1989),** chap. 18

[30]

- How does Fussell refute the view of war as a rational enterprise?
- Is he convincing? If not, what argument does he have for why you cannot know what you are talking about?
- Is Fussell a pacifist?

**Recommended:** Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, Third Edition (London: Cass, 2001); Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton University Press, 1986); Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (Macmillan, 1973); Richard K. Betts, "Conflict or Cooperation? Three Visions Revisited," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 6 (November/December 2010); Paul Fussell, *The Boys' Crusade* (Modern Library, 2000); Julian Lindley-French and Yves Boyer, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of War* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

## 2. *When Is War Murder? The Moral Calculus of Killing*

[ 123 total ]

*Absolute vs. Utilitarian Criteria*  
*Atrocities: Cold Blood and Passion*  
*Are Some Lives Worth More Than Others?*  
*Is Terrorism Ever Legitimate?*

**Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 4th Edition (Basic Books, 2000), pp. 58-63 and chaps. 5, 9, 16, 19 [77]**

- In what respects does Walzer deny that utilitarian criteria should govern standards for legitimate killing?
- In what respects does he accept such criteria?
- When does he believe that killing civilians is legitimate?
- Are his arguments consistent?

**Paul Fussell, "Thank God for the Atom Bomb," in Fussell, *Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays* (Summit Books, 1988) [22]**

- Who is more convincing – Walzer or Fussell?
- Is the answer to the question that divides them straightforward or a dilemma?

**Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Cornell University Press, 2004), chap. 3 [24]**

- Are the reasons that belligerents deliberately kill civilians rational or emotional?
- Under what conditions is targeting of civilians strategically effective or counterproductive?
- Are certain ideologies or regime types more prone to target civilians than others?

**Recommended:** Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (HarperCollins, 1992); Jörg Friedrich, *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany 1940-1945*, Allison Brown, trans. (Columbia University Press, 2006); Fred Charles Iklé, *The Social Impact of Bomb Destruction* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1958); Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing* (Basic Books, 1999); Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber* (Oxford University Press, 1954).

**Required Film:** See before lectures for section 10: *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), directed by Stephen Spielberg, screenplay by Robert Rodat. Look at the first 25-minutes (the assault on Omaha Beach) as one of the least unrealistic of Hollywood portrayals of combat. (Paul Fussell approved of this sequence.) Look at the rest of the film as an evocation of dilemmas about risking, deliberately expending, or wrongfully taking lives in wartime.

- How should decisions to expend lives be made? By what criteria?
- Whose decisions to spend lives in this venture were right or wrong?
- Did the Americans who shot surrendering soldiers while overrunning the bunkers on Omaha Beach commit a war crime for which they should have been prosecuted?
- Was Upham right or wrong about whether to kill the prisoner the first time the question arose? The second time?

## 3. *Causes of War and Peace*<sup>1</sup>

[ 400 total ]

*Psychology and Anthropology: Instinct, Ritual, or Continuation of Sport by Other Means*  
*Religion: Fighting for God*  
*Main Paradigms: Realism and Liberalism*  
*Autarky or Interdependence*  
*Ideology and Fraternity*  
*Feudalism, Capitalism, Marxism, Militarism*

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. students: Read the survey of literature in Jack Levy and William Thompson, *Causes of War* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

**Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (Columbia University Press, 1959), chaps. 2-4, 6-8 [193]**

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of each of the three images that Waltz presents?
- What are the real-world consequences --- probabilities of success or failure in different policy choices --- of diagnosing the problem of war in terms of each of the respective images?
- Why does Waltz favor the Third Image?
- What does he see as the valid or useful elements of the other two images?

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* : [131]**

**Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue"**

**Niccolò Machiavelli, "Doing Evil in Order to Do Good"**

**Thomas Hobbes, "The State of Nature and the State of War"**

**E. H. Carr, "Realism and Idealism"**

**Geoffrey Blainey, "Power, Culprits, and Arms"**

**Margaret Mead, "War is Only an Invention -- Not a Biological Necessity"**

**Richard Ned Lebow, "Spirit, Standing, and Honor"**

**Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace"**

**John Mueller, "The Obsolescence of Major War"**

**Norman Angell, "The Great Illusion"**

**Geoffrey Blainey, "Paradise is a Bazaar"**

**V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism"**

**Joseph Schumpeter, "Imperialism and Capitalism"**

**Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Causes and Economic Effects"**

**Richard Rosecrance, "Trade and Power"**

**Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics."**

- Which of these authors are arguing with each other? Which arguments are more convincing?
- What conscious or unconscious assumptions about what causes war or peace does each selection reflect? Where do these assumptions come from---common sense? scientific logic? study of history? divine revelation? something else?
- How do we know whether any of them are right or wrong? What evidence would validate or discredit any of these assumptions, arguments, or theories?
- What evidence, if any, do the authors offer to prove their arguments? Do they answer contrary theorists?
- If you disagree with any, exactly how do you refute the argument (that is, by evidence, not intuition)?
- What are benefits or risks of taking any of these arguments as guides for policymakers in the real world?
- Is international politics derivative of economics, psychology, anthropology, sociology, religious faith, or political ideology, or does it have a life and logic of its own?

**Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (Viking, 2011), pp. xxi-xxvi, 31-85, 191-200, 684-692 [76]**

- What do Pinker's data about long-term decline of violence suggest about theories advanced above?
- How do his explanations fit with other theories?
- Do his data and explanations mean that war is on the way out?

**Recommended:** Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (W.W. Norton, 1997); Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention* (Cornell University Press, 2003); Erik Gartzke, "The Capitalist Peace," *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (January 2007); Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1955); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (Scribner's, 1932); Stephen Peter Rosen, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton University Press, 2004); Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War* (Cornell University Press, 1999); James Kurth, "Inside the Cave: The Banality of IR Studies," *National Interest* No. 53 (Fall 1998); Rose McDermott, "Sex and Death: Gender Differences in Aggression and Motivations for Violence," *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2015).

#### 4. ***The Power of Order or the Order of Power? Securing Peace via Cooperative Institutions or Balance of Power***

[ 69 total ]

*What is Stability? Equilibrium or Peace*

*Meanings of Balance of Power*

*Effects of Unipolarity, Bipolarity, Multipolarity*

*International Institutions and Collective Security*

**Stanley Hoffmann, "Balance of Power," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 1 (Macmillan/Free Press, 1968)**

[4]

- What are the various meanings of "balance of power"?
- Of what use is whichever concept? What are practical consequences of the different conceptions?
- Should we want an international balance in any of these terms? If not, what alternative is preferable?

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :**

[24]

**Robert Gilpin, "Hegemonic War and International Change"**

**Woodrow Wilson, "Community of Power vs. Balance of Power"**

**Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, "Power and Interdependence"**

- Does the sweeping historical pattern that Gilpin discerns provide lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- Where do you hear Wilson's logic echoed in recent years?
- Why do Keohane and Nye point to a conclusion different from Gilpin's?
- Keohane and Nye originally wrote almost 40 years ago. Has the perspective then been borne out?

**R2P: A Feel-Good Fallacy?: Rajan Menon, "It's Fatally Flawed" and Seyom Brown and Ronald Neumann, "An Evolving Hope That's Here to Stay", *The American Interest* 8, no. 6 (July/August 2013)**

[19]

- Can humanitarian intervention ever do more harm than good?
- When if ever should great powers engage in humanitarian intervention?
- At what level of costs for intervention or abstention would your answer to the previous question change?

**Virginia Page Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work?* (Princeton University Press, 2008), chap. 5**

[22]

- Do these conclusions about peacekeeping operations (PKOs) affect conclusions about R2P?
- If "peacekeepers" are not to use force to suppress breaches of peace, how do they "keep" peace?
- Fortna's cases are a subset of peacekeeping cases – aftermaths of internal wars in recent years. Do other types of PKOs, or earlier cases, imply the same positive conclusions?
- Are implications for policy on mounting peacekeeping missions consistent with implications for peacemaking or peace enforcement missions?

**Recommended:** Inis L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (Random House, 1962); Henry A. Kissinger, *World Order* (Penguin Press, 2014); G. F. Hudson, "Collective Security and Military Alliances," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations* (Harvard University Press, 1968); Richard K. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Hampson, and Patricia Aall, eds., *Turbulent Peace* (U.S. Institute of Peace, 2001).

#### 5. ***Choosing War or Peace: Conquest, Coercion, Crisis Management***

[ 289 total ]

*The Spectrum of Choice: Concession, Compromise, Combat*

*Setting the Price of Peace: Political Stakes vs. Military Costs*

*Setting the Price of War: Blood, Treasure, and Risk*

*Deterrence, Reassurance, Crisis Management, and "Accidental" War*

*Cases: 1914, 1938, 1962, 1967*

*Theory and Practice of Coercive Force: Bombing and "Compellence"*

**Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (Yale University Press, 1966),** chaps. 2-4 [154]

- What are Schelling's assumptions about what will motivate statesmen to concede to coercion? (He is an economist. Would a psychologist, anthropologist, or historian offer any different assumptions?)
- How does Schelling implicitly agree and disagree with Clausewitz about the nature and purpose of war? Reconsider this question when you come to section 6 in a couple weeks.

**Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Cornell University Press, 1996),<sup>2</sup>** chaps. 2, 3, 9 [91]

- Why is the question Pape addresses especially important?
- How does Pape's analysis reflect on Schelling?
- Do air campaigns since Pape published confirm or contradict his argument?

**Scott D. Sagan, *The Limits of Safety* (Princeton University Press, 1993),** portions of chaps. 2 and 3: pp. 53-61, 88-100, 106-111, 114-121, 126-130, 135-142, 146-155 [44]

- How does Clausewitz's "friction" affect the balance of risks in international crisis?
- How close did the Cuban missile crisis come to turning out disastrously? What difference would such an alternative result have made in the history of the world?
- How might unplanned accidents affect chances of war or peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

**Recommended:** Gen. Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat* (PublicAffairs, 2001); Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Harvard University Press, 1997); Barbara Tuchman, *The Guns of August* (Macmillan, 1962); Charles Perrow, *Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technologies* (Princeton University Press, 1999).

## **6. *Modern War: Constraints, Conditions, Conduct*** [ 143 total ]

*Geography: Natural Security and Vulnerability*  
*Economy: Resources, Power, and Strategy*  
*Combined Arms: Armies, Navies, Air Forces*  
*Campaigns and Logistics*

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :** [16]

**Niccolò Machiavelli, "Money is Not the Sinews of War, Although It Is Generally So Considered"**

**Alan S. Milward, "War as Policy"**

- Is the aim of profit a motive for war or a constraint against it?
- How do Machiavelli's theory and the historical experience described by Milward relate to the theories about economics and war in Section 2 of the syllabus?
- Is Machiavelli logically wrong?
- Are the rationales for war described by Milward forever outmoded?

**Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford University Press, 1974),** chaps. 4-6 [62]

- What are the main trends in the evolution of warfare described by Howard?
- Which developments have enduring implications?
- How has the rough balance of advantage between attack and defense evolved over the centuries covered by Howard?

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<sup>2</sup> Ph. D. students: For criticism see Barry D. Watts, "Ignoring Reality," and Pape's rebuttal, "The Air Force Strikes Back: A Reply to Barry Watts and John Warden," in *Security Studies* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1997/98).

**Alfred Thayer Mahan, “Commerce Destroying and Blockade,”** in Allan Westcott, ed., *Mahan on Naval Warfare* (Little, Brown, 1941) [8]

- How can naval forces affect a nation’s economy?
- Is this logic antiquated or just in remission until the global balance of power changes?

**Geoffrey Till, “Naval Power,”** in Colin McInnes and G.D. Sheffield, eds., *Warfare in the Twentieth Century* (Unwin Hyman, 1988) [30]

- How does the evolution of technology affect naval strategy?
- How similar or different are the conditions in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries that affect the relevance of naval power?

**Michael E. O’Hanlon, *The Science of War* (Princeton University Press, 2009),** chap. 3 [27]

- Why is logistics at least as important as strategy and tactics?
- How do geography, technology, economics, and politics affect logistics?
- Why is logistics a higher priority for a global or maritime power than for a regional or continental power?

**Recommended:** John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (Viking, 1976); Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Brookings Institution, 1995); Bernard Brodie, *A Guide To Naval Strategy*, Fifth Edition (Praeger, 1965); Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Seapower on History, 1660-1783* (Little, Brown, 1890); Julian S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longman’s Green, 1911); Martin Van Creveld, *Supplying War* (Cambridge University Press, 1977); Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography* (Random House, 2012); Ethan Kapstein, *The Political Economy of National Security* (McGraw-Hill, 1992); Klaus Knorr, *The War Potential of Nations* (Princeton University Press, 1956); Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943* (U.S. Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1955); Robert W. Coakley and Richard M. Leighton, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1943-1945* (U.S. Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1968); Halford J. Mackinder, “The Geopolitical Pivot of History,” *Geographical Journal* 23, no. 4 (April 1904); Nicholas J. Spykman, *America’s Strategy in World Politics* (Harcourt, Brace, 1942).

## 7. **Policy, Strategy, and Operations: Integrating Political Ends and Military Means** [ 422 total ]

*Three Levels of Analysis*

*Technology: Innovations and Interactions*

*Plans: Organization, Doctrine, Tactics, Obstacles*

*Military Effectiveness: What Produces Success in Combat?*

*Attack and Defense: Aggressive, Preventive, Preemptive, and Defensive War*

*How Ends Determine Means, How Means Determine Ends*

**Clausewitz, *On War*,** Book I, chap. 7; Book II, chap. 3; Book III, chap. 1; Book VI, chaps. 1, 5 [22]

- How should the concept of “friction” affect strategic planning and decisions for war?
- How does the concept of friction affect academic strategic theories such as Schelling’s, or nuclear strategists considered in section 11 below?
- Reconsider what Clausewitz means when he says that all strategic success is at base tactical success, and that combat is the only effective force in war.
- How do Clausewitz’s arguments about attack and defense at tactical and strategic levels of analysis relate to each other?

**Stephen Biddle, *Military Power* (Princeton University Press, 2004),<sup>3</sup>** chaps. 2, 3 [37]

- Why does Biddle believe judgments about a nation’s power are likely to be wrong if they are derived from economic data about resources without an understanding of the nation’s military operational practices?
- Why haven’t all countries adopted the “modern system” of force employment?

<sup>3</sup> Ph. D. Students: See criticisms by five scholars and Biddle’s response in “*Military Power: A Roundtable Review*,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no. 3 (June 2005).

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :**

[29]

**Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma"**

**Jack S. Levy, "The Offensive/Defensive Balance of Military Technology."**

- What are the advantages of offense-defense theory?
- Are the advantages greater for understanding nuclear strategy and deterrence than for understanding other strategic competitions (see section 11 below)?
- Does Levy discredit offense-defense theory?

**Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels* (Modern Library, 2002)**

[334]

- How does this docu-novel illustrate issues and theoretical concepts considered elsewhere in the course, for example the relative advantages of attack and defense, the political effects of specific military engagements, and so on?
- The Armies: Shaara presents a contrast between the two armies' sociology, culture, and ideology. Did these differences affect combat, and thereby, political results of the war?
- The Men: What effect did "the Cause" have on leadership in the two armies? What effect did personality have on command decisions?
- The Decisions: Who was right about strategy: Lee or Longstreet? What is the best case for the opposite answer? What was Chamberlain's most important decision?
- The Battle: Was Gettysburg a "decisive battle"? What is the best case for the opposite answer? What counterfactual history must be assumed for either argument?

**Recommended:** Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones, *How the North Won* (University of Illinois Press, 1983); Dan Horowitz, "Flexible Responsiveness and Military Strategy: The Case of the Israeli Army," *Policy Sciences* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1970); Allan Millett and Williamson Murray, eds., *Military Effectiveness* (Allen and Unwin, 1988), 3 volumes; Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Cornell University Press, 1984); Stephen Peter Rosen, *Winning the Next War* (Cornell University Press, 1991); Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War* (Princeton University Press, 1997); Jack Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive* (Cornell University Press, 1984); Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Offense-Defense Theory and Its Critics," *Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (Summer 1995); Richard K. Betts, "Must War Find a Way?" *International Security* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999).

## Wednesday, October 19 Mid-Term Examination

### 8. ***Ends and Means in Total War and Limited War***

[ 232 total ]

*Estimating Costs, Benefits, and Feasibility*

*Estimating the Culminating Point of Victory*

*Total War: World Wars I and II*

*Limited War: Korea and Kuwait*

*Total or Limited? Iraq II, Afghanistan*

**Clausewitz, *On War***, Book VII, chap. 22; Book VIII, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 6

[26]

- What are the risks in overshooting or undershooting the "culminating point of victory"?
- If "absolute" war is not "real" war, what is the point of understanding the concept of absolute war?
- Why does Clausewitz hammer so hard and in such detail on the principle that war must serve policy? How does the concept of absolute war relate to this question?

**Michael Gordon and Gen. Bernard Trainor, *The Generals' War* (Little, Brown, 1995)**, chaps. 18-20

[86]

- How does the ending of the 1991 war illustrate important political effects of friction in military operations?
- Did that war end satisfactorily? By what criteria?



**Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (Simon & Schuster, 2010), chaps. 18-19, 21-25, 28, 30** [107]

- How do domestic and bureaucratic politics affect decisions on strategy?
- When responsible officials disagree about what strategy makes sense, is compromise the right solution?

**Stephen Biddle, "Afghanistan's Legacy," *Washington Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2014)** [13]

- Are problems of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan unique or do they reflect problems inherent in intervention in weakly institutionalized states?
- Did Obama make the right decisions in 2009?

**Recommended:** Samuel Eliot Morison, *Strategy and Compromise* (Atlantic/Little, Brown, 1958); Kent Roberts Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1963); Norman Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 2 volumes (Norton, 1973-74); Scott Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars* (Cambridge University Press, 1989); Leslie H. Gelb with Richard K. Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam* (Brookings Institution, 1979); Michael Gordon and Gen. Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II* (Pantheon, 2006).

## **9. *Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare*** [ 283 total ]

*People's War, Counterinsurgency, and Incentives for "Asymmetric" Strategies*  
*Linkages Between Conventional and Unconventional War*  
*Stealth, Strength, and Advantages of Attack Over Defense*  
*Motives for Resort to Terror Tactics*  
*Secular and Sacred Motivations*

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :** [86]

**Martha Crenshaw, "The Strategic Logic of Terrorism"**

**Marc Sageman, "Jihadi Networks of Terror"**

**Osama bin Ladin, "Speech to the American People."**

**T. E. Lawrence, "Science of Guerrilla Warfare"**

**Mao Tse-tung, "On Guerrilla Warfare"**

**Samuel P. Huntington, "Patterns of Violence in World Politics"**

**Eliot Cohen, Conrad Crane, Jan Horvath, and John Nagl, "Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency"**

**Gian P. Gentile, "A Strategy of Tactics: The Folly of Counterinsurgency"**

- By what criteria can terrorism be judged strategically rational?
- Are there effective strategic alternatives to terrorism?
- What are the differences between "conventional" warfare and unconventional/guerrilla/insurgent/irregular/asymmetric warfare?
- Is guerrilla warfare a substitute for conventional military operations?
- Are there effective strategic alternatives to guerrilla warfare?
- What assumptions about politics—in societies experiencing rebellion and intervention by outside countries—make the strategy and tactics recommended for counterinsurgency practical, and what assumptions would invalidate them?
- Is Gentile's critique of the U.S. Army's focus on counterinsurgency persuasive, or an example of the dysfunctional attitude criticized by Krepinevich?

**Jerrold M. Post, "Terrorist Psycho-Logic," in Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998)** [15]

- How does Post's diagnosis compare with Crenshaw's or Sageman's?
- Are the differences fundamental disagreements, or related to the different times and groups on which the three authors focus?

**Clausewitz, *On War***, Book VI, chap. 26

[5]

- What differences does Clausewitz see between “the people in arms” and the other forms of war?
- How does this chapter relate to current issues of revolutionary warfare and counterinsurgency?

**Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy* (Presidio Press, 1982)**, chaps. 7-11, 15

[85]

- Summers frames the Vietnam War in terms of Clausewitz. Is any other interpretation of Clausewitz relevant, and might it lead to a different conclusion?
- What does Summers believe the center of gravity was for each side?
- What is his strongest argument?
- What is his weakest argument?

**Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1986)**, chaps. 1,6-8

[92]

- What does Krepinevich believe the center of gravity was?
- Who is more convincing: Summers or Krepinevich?
- What is the main difference in their descriptions of U.S. strategy in Vietnam?
- Can the two interpretations be reconciled?
- Could the Vietnam War have been won by the USA and Saigon government if either Summers’s or Krepinevich’s preferred strategies had been fully adopted?

**Recommended:** Christopher Harmon, “Five Strategies of Terrorism,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 12, no. 3 (Autumn 2001); Martha Crenshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism,” *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (July 1981); Richard K. Betts, “The Soft Underbelly of American Primacy,” *Political Science Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2002); Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Second Edition (Columbia University Press, 2006); John Mueller, *Overblown*: (Free Press, 2006); *The 9/11 Commission Report* (W. W. Norton, 2004); Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (Random House, 2005); Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Brookings Institution Press, 2001); Eric Frank Russell, *Wasp* (London: Victor Gollancz, 2000); Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era* (Free Press, 1977); *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, U.S. Army FM 3-24, U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5 (University of Chicago Press, 2007); J.B. Firth, “The Guerrilla in History,” *Fortnightly Review* (W.L. Courtney, ed.), 70, New Series (July-December 1901); T. E. Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert* (Garden City Publishing, 1927); David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (Praeger, 1964); Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Col. Gian Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America’s Deadly Embrace of Counter-Insurgency* (New Press, 2013); Austin Long, *On “Other War”* (RAND Corporation, 2006); Andrew Mack, “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars,” *World Politics* 28, no. 2 (January 1975); Carter Malkasian, *War Comes to Garmser: Thirty Years of Conflict on the Afghan Frontier* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Mao Tse-tung, *On the Protracted War* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1954).

**Required Film:** See before the end of section 8: ***The Battle of Algiers*** (1966), directed by Gilo Pontecorvo, screenplay by Franco Solinas. Remember that the French did not consider Algeria a colony, but part of metropolitan France (it had about a million European settlers). Although fiction, several characters are composites of real figures (one of the FLN leaders plays himself in the movie). The realism of this film is demonstrated by the fact that after early showings the producers had to insert a notice at the beginning that it was not a documentary. While obviously pro-FLN, the film is also unusual in the extent to which it does not demonize the French, but empathizes with them.

- Were the tactics used on either or both sides illegitimate? Does the legitimacy or illegitimacy of terror or torture depend on the nature of the tactics or the justice of the cause they serve?
- By what criteria were tactics employed effective or counterproductive?
- Could either side have won without using those tactics? How are the issues of legitimacy and efficacy related?
- How are terrorism and guerrilla warfare related?
- How are the issues posed by Al Qaeda, the Taliban, or Hamas today similar and different from those in this case?
- Is Colonel Mathieu’s character evil, admirable, tragic, or something else?
- How do the French and FLN strategies reflect Huntington’s points about the “tripartite” nature of revolutionary war or Mao’s points about guerrillas and population being “fish” and “sea”?
- Did the U.S. government learn the wrong lessons from this film?

## 10. **Society, Polity, Culture, and Capability**

[ 178 total ]

*Nationalism, State Expansion, and Social Mobilization*

*Civil-Military Relations*

*Recruitment, Conscription, Organization*

*Culture and Combat Effectiveness*

*Combat Motivation: When Fighting Can Get One Killed, What Makes One Fight?*

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War*:**

[40]

**Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, “Democratization and War”**

**Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars”**

**Radha Kumar, “The Troubled History of Partition.”**

- Do Mansfield and Snyder discredit “democratic peace” theory?
- Is Kaufmann or Kumar more convincing? What counterfactual histories do you assume in making your judgment?

**Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, “Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1948)**

[35]

- Why did the *Wehrmacht* hold together and continue fighting like wild dogs even after defeat was nearly certain?

**Omer Bartov, *Hitler’s Army* (Oxford University Press, 1991), chap. 4**

[72]

- Why does Bartov disagree with Shils and Janowitz?
- Can the two interpretations be reconciled?

**Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War* (University of Nebraska Press, 2002),<sup>4</sup> “Conclusions and Lessons”**

[31]

- If Arab military personnel fight so bravely, why does Pollack believe that Arab military organizations have been ineffective in combat?
- What explanations other than cultural ones might there be?

**Recommended:** George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (Harcourt, Brace, 1952); E.H. Carr, *Nationalism and After* (Macmillan, 1945); Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton University Press, 1975); Myron Weiner, “The Macedonian Syndrome,” *World Politics* 23, no. 4 (July 1971); Dima Adamsky, *The Culture of Military Innovation* (Stanford University Press, 2010); Stanislav Andreski, *Military Organization and Society* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954); Risa A. Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley, eds., *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford University Press, 2007); Martin van Creveld, *Fighting Power* (Greenwood, 1982); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Harvard University Press, 1957); Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback* (Praeger, 1962); Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command* (Free Press, 2002); Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises*, Second Edition (Columbia University Press, 1991); Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictator’s Army* (Cornell University Press, 2015); Kimberley Marten, *Warlords* (Cornell University Press, 2012); M. Brewster Smith, “Combat Motivations Among Ground Troops,” in Samuel A. Stouffer, et al., *The American Soldier*, Vol. II: *Combat and Its Aftermath* (Princeton University Press, 1949).

## 11. **The Nuclear Revolution: Theory and Practice**

[ 117 total ]

*Nuclear Weapon Effects*

*Deterrence and Compellence*

*Rationality, Uncertainty, and Credibility*

*Limited War and Escalation*

*Nuclear War Plans and Operational Doctrine*

*Cold War Crises*

<sup>4</sup> Ph.D. students: See Risa A. Brooks, “Making Military Might: Why Do States Fail and Succeed?” *International Security* 28, no. 2 (Fall 2003), for a critique of Pollack.

Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, Third Edition (Palgrave, 2003), chaps. 6-9, 12, 14-16

[117]

- What are the basic concepts of deterrence theory?
- What were the main changes in ideas and policies about nuclear strategy in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?
- What are the arguments for and against counterforce targeting, and for and against resting nuclear strategy on countervalue targeting and capability for “assured destruction”?
- How did NATO strategy for the defense of Western Europe affect the development of nuclear strategy?
- How much did actual practice in nuclear strategy reflect the dominant concepts of theorists?
- Can nuclear strategy be rational? What would Clausewitz think about nuclear weapons?
- Which aspects of Cold War deterrence theory and nuclear strategy are transferable to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and which not? What does your answer assume about future developments in international politics and military technology?

**Recommended:** John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (Knopf, 1946); Bernard Brodie, ed., *The Absolute Weapon* (Harcourt, Brace, 1946); Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft* (Cornell University Press, 2012); Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (Princeton University Press, 1960); Herman Kahn, *On Escalation* (Hudson Institute, 1965); Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Harvard University Press, 1960); Glenn H. Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense* (Princeton University Press, 1961); Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 1989); John D. Steinbruner, “National Security and the Concept of Strategic Stability,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22, no. 3 (September 1978); Bruce G. Blair, *The Logic of Accidental Nuclear War* (Brookings Institution, 1993); Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Simon and Schuster, 1983); Scott D. Sagan, *Moving Targets* (Princeton University Press, 1989); David N. Schwartz, *NATO’s Nuclear Dilemmas* (Brookings Institution, 1983); Richard K. Betts, *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* (Brookings Institution, 1987); David E. Hoffman, *The Dead Hand* (Doubleday, 2009); Vipin Narang, *Nuclear Strategy in the Modern Era* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

**Required Film:** *Fail Safe* (1964), directed by Sidney Lumet, screenplay by Walter Bernstein, based on the novel by Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler. The non-comedy counterpart to *Dr. Strangelove* as a scenario of accidental nuclear war.

- What if the system of peacetime deterrence imagined by theorists had gone wrong?
- Is the President’s decision at the end plausible? If not, what else should he have done, at the risk of what results?
- Does the plot seem plausible for the Cold War but not after? If so, see *Crimson Tide* (1995).

## 12. *Threat Assessment and Strategic Planning*

[ 103 total ]

*Aggression or Security Dilemma?*  
*Intentions and Capabilities*  
*Deterrence and Provocation*  
*Intelligence and Uncertainty*  
*Strategic Assumptions and Superpower Force Planning*

Eyre Crowe, “Memorandum on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany,” January 1, 1907, and Thomas Sanderson, “Observations on Printed Memorandum on Relations with France and Germany, January 1907,” in G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, eds., *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, vol. III: *The Testing of the Entente, 1904-6* (London: HMSO, 1928) (NB: Read pp. 399-405, 414-419; skim the rest.) [11]

- How do the respective rationales of Crowe and Sanderson, and Henderson in the Munich crisis documents below, reflect the dilemmas of deterrence and crisis management?
- Is there a strategic concept for resolving such dilemmas?
- If British, French, and Russian statesmen had acted more in line with Sanderson’s and Henderson’s (see next item) thinking, might World War I have been avoided?
-

Documents 551, 553, and 650 on the Munich crisis in E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, eds., assisted by Margaret Lambert, *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, 3d Series, vol. II: 1938* (London: HMSO, 1949) [7]

- Is it a good idea to empathize with an adversary? Is it feasible to have empathy without sympathy?
- When a threat is uncertain, which emphasis in policy---deterrence or reassurance---is least risky?
- If British, French, and Soviet statesmen in 1938 had acted more in line with Crowe's logic, might they have resisted Hitler earlier?

Address by President of the Russian Federation, 18 March 2014 (Official Site of the President of Russia), at <http://eng.news.kremlin.ru/news/6889/print> [10]

- Is Putin's rationale for annexing Crimea aggressive, defensive, or something else?
- Is he right or wrong about western double standards for Kosovo, secession of Ukraine from the USSR, and other cases?

G. John Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (January/February 2008) [14]

- Where does Ikenberry's argument fit among the theories surveyed in sections 2 and 3?
- Does his argument show what western military strategy in the region should be?
- What is the most important word that does not appear anywhere in this article?

Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War*: [13]  
Richard K. Betts and Thomas J. Christensen, "China: Can the Next Superpower Rise Without War?"

- Is the possibility of deliberate aggression by China what the West should worry about most?
- What historical analogies are least misleading in estimating the odds of conflict between China and the West?

Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996/97) [48]

- How do the strategic alternatives discussed relate to theories surveyed in sections 2 and 3?
- Which of the four general strategies outlined make the most and least sense?
- Where do the strategies of the Bush II and Obama administrations fit in the Posen-Ross framework?
- Is there a fifth model truly different from the four outlined that should be added to the list?

**Recommended:** Eliot A. Cohen, "The 'Kind of Thing' Crisis," *American Interest* 10, no. 3 (January/February 2015); John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September/October 2014); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1976); Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails* (Cornell University Press, 2010); Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack* (Brookings Institution, 1982); Richard K. Betts, *Enemies of Intelligence* (Columbia University Press, 2007); Alain Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much Is Enough?* (Harper & Row, 1971); Lawrence Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, Second Edition (Princeton University Press, 1986); Ernest R. May, ed., *Knowing One's Enemies* (Princeton University Press, 1984); Paul R. Pillar, *Intelligence and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press, 2011); Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford University Press, 1962).

## 13. **Arms Control** [ 11 total ]

*Political, Economic, and Military Rationales for Arms Regulation*  
*Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD): Cold War Negotiations*  
*Conventional Forces: "Defense Dominance"?*  
*Regional Conflicts and Incentives for Proliferation*  
*WMD After the Cold War: Biological, Chemical, Nuclear*

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :**

**Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better."<sup>5</sup>**

[11]

- What are the best counterarguments to Waltz's benign view of nuclear proliferation?
- Can one reject Waltz's logic and still believe that nuclear deterrence was stable during the Cold War?
- How can negotiated regulation of arms limits shape incentives for war or peace, or foster "crisis stability"?

**Recommended:** Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control* (Twentieth Century Fund, 1961); John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973); Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr. and Abram N. Shulsky, "Arms Control: The Historical Experience," in Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War*; Richard Dean Burns, ed., *Encyclopedia of Arms Control and Disarmament*, 3 volumes (Scribner's, 1993); Charles Fairbanks, "Arms Races," *National Interest* No. 1 (Fall 1985); Colin S. Gray, *House of Cards* (Cornell University Press, 1992); Samuel P. Huntington, "Arms Races: Prerequisites and Results," *Public Policy: Yearbook of the Graduate School of Public Administration, Harvard University* (Harvard University, 1958); Michael A. Levi and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *The Future of Arms Control* (Brookings Institution Press, 2005); Salvador de Madariaga, *Disarmament* (Coward-McCann, 1929).

## 14. **Conclusion:**

### ***Evolving Contours of Conflict and Cooperation***

[ 97 total ]

*Power Without Force?*

*Cyber Conflict and Information Warfare*

*Non-Lethal Weaponry*

*Theories, Experience, and Prediction*

*A "Revolution in Military Affairs"?*

*Environmental Sources of Conflict*

*Does Dependence on Information Technology Revolutionize Vulnerability?*

*Religion, Culture, and Conflict*

**Eliot A. Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 2 (March/April 1996)**

[17]

- Why did the concept of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) have such appeal?
- How does the RMA and its alleged promise relate to unconventional warfare?

**Biddle, *Military Power*, chap. 10**

[18]

- How does Biddle challenge the idea of the RMA?
- Who is more convincing – Cohen or Biddle?

**Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War* :**

[27]

**Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict"<sup>6</sup>**

**Samuel P. Huntington, "Peace Among Civilizations?"**

- What should standards be for categorizing environmental dangers or resource competition as security threats?
- Are attempts to spread western values good or bad for peace?

**Martin C. Libicki, *Cyberdeterrence and Cyberwar* (RAND Corporation, 2009), chap. 3**

[35]

- How similar and different are cyber conflict and other forms of political violence?
- What are the key differences in the logic of deterrence between nuclear strategy and cybersecurity?
- Can modern society be insulated from catastrophe if the Internet and information systems are vulnerable to sabotage?

<sup>5</sup> For elaboration and rebuttal see Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate*, Third Edition (W.W. Norton, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> If you find Homer-Dixon's article compelling and are interested in the problem, be sure to read Indra de Soysa, "Ecoviolence," which presents a different argument, in Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War*.

**Recommended:** David A. Baldwin, "Security Studies and the End of the Cold War," *World Politics* 48, no. 1 (October 1995); Richard K. Betts, "Should Strategic Studies Survive?" *World Politics* 50, no. 1 (October 1997); Richard K. Betts, *American Force* (Columbia University Press, 2012); Fred C. Iklé, *Annihilation from Within* (Columbia University Press, 2006); Martin Rees, *Our Final Hour* (Basic Books, 2003); Colin Kahl, *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World* (Princeton University Press, 2006); Andrew Krepinevich, "Cavalry to Computer," *National Interest* No. 37 (Fall 1994); Eliot A. Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 2 (March/April 1996); P. W. Singer and Allan Friedman, *Cybersecurity and Cyberwar* (Oxford University Press, 2014); Martin Libicki, *Cyberspace in Peace and War* (Naval Institute Press, 2016); Michael O'Hanlon, *Technological Change and the Future of Warfare* (Brookings Institution Press, 2000); Susan Peterson, "Epidemic Disease and National Security," *Security Studies* 12, no. 2 (Winter 2002/3); P. W. Singer, *Wired for War* (Penguin Press, 2009); Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton University Press, 2004); Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (Free Press, 1991).

*"You would feel that after so many centuries  
God would give man to repent; yet he can kill  
As Cain could, but with multitudinous will,  
No farther advanced than in his ancient furies."*

--- Richard Eberhart,  
"The Fury of Aerial Bombardment"

## ***Are You Sure You Want to Take This Course ?***

I'm delighted to have you in this course as long as you want the kind of experience it will be. Consider this in advance because evaluations at the end of the course in the past have sometimes been mixed. Several times an evaluation has said that it is the best course the student ever took, but a fair number complain about some aspect. Some say the class should be different in ways x, y, or z. Maybe so, but the course is what it is for a number of reasons that make sense to me, so know what you're getting into and be sure that you want to accept the conditions.

First, this is a lecture class. Size shakes down after the first two weeks, but normally stays at over 100. There will be interaction, and discussion now and then, but obviously it can be nothing like a seminar. For some graduate students, especially those who went to small colleges, this can be new and disappointing. If you do not want to listen and take notes most of the time, this class is not for you. There are opportunities for extended discussion---especially of the readings---in the weekly sections with the teaching assistants; you should take full advantage of these.

Second, I read much of my lectures. Some students find this traditional practice annoying. I do it because I am not talented enough to memorize everything I should say, and using only rough notes takes more time to make the points, reducing the amount communicated. I apologize in advance, but if you do not like listening to formal lectures, the course is not for you. Also, I do not use hi-tech or even medium-tech instructional aids such as Power Point. Schematics or important illustrative material will be given to you in paper copies to keep, or written on the blackboard for you to jot down. You will have to ponder a few movies too. Otherwise, you really just need to listen, read, and take notes.

Third, some want the course to focus more on subjects other than those emphasized on the syllabus, although there is never agreement on what the differences should be. Some want a current events course, less historical orientation, or a course that reflects American perspectives less (or more) than this one does, or one that is less theoretical (or more), and so on. So be sure you have considered the syllabus and want to spend your time learning about what it covers.

Fourth, many consider the reading load unreasonable. I am a throwback whose standards of literacy predate the Internet age, and on education I am an elitist. You are all here because you are smarter and more motivated, or more privileged, than average university students. This is not Morningside Heights Community College. It's Columbia University, the big leagues. I intend for my course to provide as much as the best students, working to maximum capacity, can absorb. And the best students at Columbia *do* manage to do all the assigned reading, ponder it, and

integrate it thematically with the lectures in their minds. They are the ones who get straight A's, usually 10-15 percent of the class. Others who do not quite get everything, but come close, get A Minuses. More get A Minuses than straight A's, and since this is a graduate class a third or more of all grades are in the A range. The median grade has been B Plus, which conforms to the SIPA guideline. Students who cut many corners, or are not intellectually prepared for a graduate social science course, get lower grades.

Assigned reading averages one regular academic book or five to ten articles per week. This used to be standard in Ivy League courses. Some surveys have indicated that average time spent studying by college students has declined by about one-third in recent times (Daniel de Vise, "Is College Too Easy? As Study Time Falls, Debate Rises," *Washington Post*, May 21, 2012), but there is no reason that you need conform to such a trend. Despite the profusion of electronic distractions in recent times, and the tendency of some students to begin weekends on Thursday, I am confident that the current generation is as smart as earlier ones, as ambitious, and fully capable of working to a traditional high standard if the right priorities are accepted. You cannot do all the work if you do not spend 20 percent of your time on this course (the commitment implied if you are a full-time student), but you can if you do. Many graduate students come from places where they could be in the top tier with less effort than necessary to be in the top tier at Columbia. Some may need to adjust priorities if they want to excel in the course rather than just perform satisfactorily. **My goal is for you to feel by the end of the course that you have run a marathon, to feel exhausted but intellectually invigorated, and to feel that you have learned as much as possible in the time available. If you like that idea, welcome aboard.**

## A Note on One Rule

The information technology revolution is wonderful; properly exploited, it helps us learn more than was possible in earlier times, and studies indicate that use of the Internet can improve cognitive performance in some ways. But overall the advance is a matter of two steps forward, one step back. Some students ask why I insist on disconnecting from the Internet while in class---an utterly Unnatural Act for the current generation. One reason is the conceit that I deserve your full attention; if not, you are being cheated of your tuition. At any moment you are looking something up on the Internet, you cannot be absorbing what I am saying. *There is scientific evidence that discredits the practices of juggling intellectual engagement with related activities or attempting to perform two intellectual functions at once*; studies have discovered measurable degradation of perception and performance when multitasking. For example see:

- Eyal Ophir, Clifford Nass, and Anthony D. Wagner, "Cognitive Control in Multitaskers," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 106, no. 3 (April 1, 2009).
- Ruth Pennebaker, "The Mediocre Multitasker," *New York Times Week in Review*, August 30, 2009 (a journalist's more readable and humorous summary of the above academic study).
- Joshua S. Rubinstein, David E. Meyer, and Jeffrey Evans, "Executive Control of Cognitive Processes in Task Switching," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2001).
- Christine Rosen, "The Myth of Multitasking," *The New Atlantis* (Spring 2008).

Evidence is beginning to accumulate of declines among students in attention span and retention from reading. Consider the downside of contemporary learning practices that have become second nature for many in the current generation, found in research studies reported in Michael S. Rosenwald, "Serious Reading Takes a Hit from Online Scanning and Skimming, Researchers Say," *Washington Post*, April 6, 2014 and other studies reported in Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* (W.W. Norton, 2010), where he writes, "When we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning." Or as John Horgan puts it ("So Many Links, So Little Time," *Wall Street Journal*, June 4, 2010):

We skim web pages and skip quickly from one to another. We read in what is called an "F" pattern: After taking in the first two lines of a text, we zip right down the rest of the page. We lose the ability to transfer knowledge



from short-term “working” memory to long-term memory.... **Students who net-surf during class, even if their searches are related to the professor’s lecture, remember less than unconnected students.... Verbal SAT scores – which measure reading and writing aptitude – have dropped over the past decade as Internet usage has skyrocketed.** What we gain from the Internet in breadth of knowledge – or rather, access to knowledge – we lose in depth.

All that is the dark side of progress. Of particular interest to students are studies that researchers say “demonstrate that media multitasking while learning is negatively associated with students’ grades” (Annie Murphy Paul, “The New Marshmallow Test,” *Slate*, May 3, 2013). In any case, in a course for which you (or your parents or scholarship donors) pay thousands of dollars I see no reason to waste time with readings that provoke so little thought that they can be sufficiently appreciated by skimming, or lectures that you can fully grasp while scanning something else. To ingest and assimilate the material in this course sufficiently you must concentrate, and concentrate on one thing at a time.

**If You Want to Have Your Opinions on Foreign Policy Taken Seriously by Professionals:** You need to know current events in depth. That is not possible with less than thorough daily reading of the “A” section of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or at very least, *The Wall Street Journal*. *The Economist* once a week is not enough, though less irresponsible for an aspiring professional than anything less, such as reliance on Internet or television news.

**“Trigger Warning”:** In recent times some emotionally fragile students have been known to want warnings of which course materials might disturb them. Many aspects of the subject of war should be disturbing and any serious students should expect to be disturbed occasionally in the course of education. The required films for this course have only a few parts that are shockingly graphic, and most of the readings and lectures are not, but *consider this a warning for the whole course*. Anyone who does not wish to confront and contemplate materials concerning death, destruction, pain, violence, and cruelty on a grand scale should not take this course.

**Honesty Reminder:** Columbia University, its Department of Political Science and School of International and Public Affairs, do not tolerate cheating or plagiarism in any form. Students who violate the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct will be subject to discipline (in SIPA, via the Dean's Disciplinary Procedures). You are responsible for familiarizing yourself thoroughly with definitions and rules pertaining to violations. You may view the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct and other resources that discuss proper norms at: [http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/deans\\_discipline\\_policy.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/deans_discipline_policy.html) and [http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/code\\_of\\_conduct.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html). Violations of the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct should be reported to the professor and, for SIPA, to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.