

Syllabus – Spring 2010
Harvard University

The Origins of Modern Wars
GOV-1732

Class Time: Monday and Wednesday, 1-2 PM
The first day of class is Monday, January 25, 2010

Professor Stephen M. Walt

Office: Littauer 367 (Kennedy School of Government)

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:15-4:15

(please sign up on sheet outside L-367)

Head Teaching Fellow:

Faculty Assistant: Katie Naeve, L-209
(495-8833)

Course Description:

This course examines a number of popular explanations of war. We will test these competing theories by exploring several major conflicts of the 20th century: World War I, World War II, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the 1991 and 2003 Gulf Wars, and the Central African War. We will also consider various solutions that have been proposed to eliminate or reduce the danger of war and explore whether war will be more or less likely in the future.

Course Requirements:

Students in this course are expected to complete all of the required reading, and are responsible for all the material presented in the lectures. Attendance at all lectures is expected. Grades will be based on an in-class midterm (20%), term paper (30%) a final exam (40%) and participation in mandatory discussion sections (10%).

Course Materials:

The following books should be purchased at the Coop/Barnes & Noble.

- P. M. H. Bell, *The Origins of the Second World War in Europe*
- M. Howard, *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction*.
- W. Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1996*.
- S. Miller et. al., eds. *Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War*
- R. Rotberg and T. Rabb, eds., *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*
- C. D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*
- J. Mueller, *The Remnants of War*

Most of the other materials will be available on-line and accessible via the course webpage. Readings that are not available on-line have been placed on Reserve at Lamont Library.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

I: THE CAUSES OF WAR: ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

A. Anarchy and the Security Dilemma (Monday, January 25).

- S. Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War." *International Security* 22, no. 4 (Spring 1998).
- R. Jervis, "Deterrence, the Spiral Model, and the Intentions of the Adversary," from *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, 1976), 58-113.
- K. Waltz, "The Origins of War," (excerpt from *Man, the State, and War*, Columbia, 1959).

B. The Balance of Power and the International System (Wednesday, January 27)

- J. J. Mearsheimer, "The Causes of Great Power War," from *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (W.W. Norton, 2001), pp. 334-359.
- K. Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neo-Realist Theory," in Rotberg & Rabb, eds., *Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*.
- R. Gilpin, "[The Theory of Hegemonic War](#)," in Rotberg & Rabb, eds., *Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*.

C. Domestic Politics and War (Monday, February 1)

- M. Halperin and A. Kanter, "Organizational Interests," from *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Brookings Press, 1976).
- J. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," in Rotberg & Rabb, *Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*.
- E. Mansfield and J. Snyder "[Democratization and War](#)," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 3 (1995) 79-97.

D. Misperception and War (Wednesday, February 3)

- J. Fearon, "[Rationalist Explanations for War](#)," *International Organization*, 49(3), pp. 379-414.
- D. Kahneman and J. Renshon. "[Why Hawks Win](#)," *Foreign Policy* 154 (Jan. 2007), 34-38.
- R. Jervis, "Misperception and War," in Rotberg & Rabb, *Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*.
- S. Van Evera, "[Why States Believe Foolish Ideas](#)," (unpublished ms., 2002).

E. Civil (and not so civil) Wars (Monday, February 8)

- B. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival*, Vol. 35, no. 1 (1993).
- J. Fearon, and D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003), pp. 75-90.
- J. Mueller, *Remnants of War*, chap. 6
- M. Toft, "Getting Religion: The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 31, no. 4 (Spring 2007).

II. CASE #1: THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A. The European System (Wednesday, February 10)

- J. Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive," and
- P. Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," both in Miller et al, *Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War*.
- M. Howard, *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction*, chap. 1.

****NO CLASS FEB. 15th (President's Day)***

B. The Outbreak of the War (Wednesday, February 17; Monday, February 22)*

M. Howard, *The First World War*, chap. 2

S. Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War."

M. Trachtenberg, "The Meaning of Mobilization in 1914."

S. Sagan, "Allies, Offense, and Instability" (all three in Miller et. al, *Military Strategy*. . .).

K. Lieber, "[The New History of World War I and What It Means for International Relations Theory](#)," *International Security* 32, no. 2 (Fall 2007).

C. The Conduct and Settlement of World War I (Wednesday, February 24)

Howard, M., *The First World War*, chaps. 3

III. CASE #2: THE SECOND WORLD WAR:

A. Europe and Asia Between the Wars (March 1)

H. Herwig, "Clio Deceived: Patriotic Self-Censorship in Germany after the Great War," in Miller et al, ed. *Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War*

P.M.H. Bell, *The Origins of the Second World War in Europe*, skim pp. 51-126, read pp. 127-61.

B. The Coming of War in Europe (Wednesday March 3)

P.M.H. Bell, *Origins of the Second World War in Europe*, pp. 162-301.

C. The Coming of War in the Pacific (Monday, March 8)

J. Snyder, "Japan's Bid for Autarky," from *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Cornell, 1993), pp. 112-52.

S. Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War," in Rotberg and Raab, *Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*.

MIDTERM EXAM: Wednesday, March 10

SPRING BREAK: No classes March 15 or 17.

IV. CASE #3: THE COLD WAR

A. The Origins of the Cold War (Monday, March 22)

W. Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*, chaps. 1-5.

B. How the Cold War Was Fought (Wednesday, March 24)

W. Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*, chaps. 6-12.

V. CASE #4: THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT (March 29, 31, April 5, April 7)

C.D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (entire).

A. Shlaim, "[The War of the Israeli Historians](#)," *Miftah.org*, March 18, 2004.

M. Oren, "Did Israel Want the Six Day War?" *Azure* 7, (1999), 47-86.

R. Popp, "Stumbling Decidedly into the Six-Day War," *Middle East Journal* 60(2): (2006), pp. 281-309.

J. Pressman, "Visions in Collision: What Happened at Camp David and Taba?" *International Security* 28, no. 2 (2003).

something very recent? Agca/Malley?

VI. CASE #5: THE UNITED STATES VERSUS IRAQ (Wednesday, April 12, April 14)

E. Karsh and I. Rautsi, "Why Saddam Hussein Invaded Kuwait," *Survival* 33, no. 1 (1992), 18-30.

C. Kaufmann, C., "[Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: the Selling of the Iraq War](#)," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (Summer 2004). 5-48.

J. J. Mearsheimer and S.M. Walt, "[An Unnecessary War](#)," *Foreign Policy* 143 (January-February 2003), 50-59.

K. Pollock, "[Next Stop, Baghdad](#)," *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 2 (2002), 32-47.

VII. CASE #6: THE GREAT CENTRAL AFRICAN WAR (April 19, April 21)

T. Turner, *The Congo Wars*.

VII. THE FUTURE OF WAR

A. Weapons of Mass Destruction (Wednesday, April 26)

K. Waltz, "Nuclear Myths and Political Realities," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 3 (1990), 731-745.

G. Allison, "[How to Stop Nuclear Terror](#)," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 1 (January/February 2004).

G. Shultz, W. Perry, H. Kissinger, S. Nunn, "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons," *Wall Street Journal*, January 4, 2007.

C. A New World (Dis)Order? (Wednesday, April 28)

S. Huntington, "[The Clash of Civilizations](#)," *Foreign Affairs* 72 no. 3 (1993).

J. Mueller, J., *Remnants of War*, chaps. 2, 3, 7, 9.

Human Security Resource Center, *MiniAtlas of Human Security* (2008) available at <http://www.miniatlasofhumansecurity.info/en/access.html>.

R. Kaplan, "The Revenge of Geography," *Foreign Policy* (2009)

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, MAY 12