

Department of Political Science

**POLI 3596
Explaining Global Conflict and Violence**

Fall 2012

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 13:05-14:25
LSC-Common Area C202

Instructor: Jean-Christophe Boucher
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Hours: Tuesday 2:30-4:30 pm, or by appointment
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Course description and objectives

During a 13 week period in 1994 more than 800,000 people were killed in Rwanda – that number exceeds the combined total of Canadian and American military casualties in both World War I and II. Between 1990 and 1995, 250,000 people died in the Balkans – the equivalent of one US Oklahoma bombing disaster (168 casualties) every day for four years. Large-scale violence associated with interstate and intrastate conflict and war continues to have undeniable relevance for all of humanity. Given the rise of ethnic conflicts in Europe and proliferation of advanced weapons technology worldwide, providing answers to pressing questions about the onset and escalation of war is imperative in the aftermath of the Cold War. Unfortunately, notwithstanding years of inquiry on the nature and origins of war, it remains unclear whether we have produced any definitive knowledge. What is war? How is it different from other activities such as art, commerce or diplomacy? What are the causes of collective violence? What are the political and ethical ramifications of using violence? The scourge of war remains one of humanities' most daunting and durable challenges. Understanding why human collective groups fight each other is probably one of the primary intellectual enterprises one can devote his time to, and which has puzzled scholars for millennia.

This seminar is designed, in part, to provide students with a comprehensive and critical review of answers to questions about the onset, escalation, and de-escalation of violent conflicts. This course will focus on examining the various forms of conflicts and organized violence used by human societies. We will study war in a comprehensive way through its philosophical, political, sociological, and ethical roots in order to grasp the intricacies of collective violence and its role in human history. We will not limit ourselves to interstate conflicts and civil war, but will extend our investigation to non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, piracy, and cyberconflicts.

Website

The course website on the Blackboard Learn system (Bblearn) can be accessed through my.dal.ca. It includes, among other resources, a digital copy of the syllabus, updates to any changes to the syllabus throughout the semester, web links to some readings that are not in the required book. If you have a technical problem with the course website, email the Help Desk: helpdesk@dal.ca.

Readings

You will find most readings available on the Bblearn system or on reserve at the Killam Memorial Library. I highly recommend students to buy (and read) Jack S. Levy, and William R. Thompson. 2010. *Causes of War*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. The book is easily available at www.amazon.ca.

Requirements and Grading

Midterm	30%	November 1 st
Paper	35%	December 4 th
Final exam	35%	Exam period

Midterm Exam

In class, November 1st, 2012. The exam will focus on the material covered in class and readings. It will consist of short to medium length questions.

Paper

In this paper, the student will select one conflict, crisis, or war of his/her choosing. With this historical case, the student will assess the relevance of some theory on the causes of war viewed in class. The objective of this exercise is to apply theoretical perspectives to actual historical cases of collective violence. The paper's length should be of approximately 6 000 words and will be due on December 4th, 2012.

Final Exam

The final exam will cover material and readings from the entire semester. It will be scheduled by the University Registrar. The official exam period is December 6-20th. Do not make travel plans until after the official date of the final exam has been released.

Deadlines and Late Penalties

Any assignment received after the due date will be subject to a late penalty of 5% per day, unless appropriate written documentation such as a doctor's note is provided. Please plan your work well ahead of time to avoid this.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic ethics. All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the **plagiarism.dal.ca** website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

To ensure that you understand what plagiarism is, I suggest you take the following online quiz: <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz.html> . You might find some surprises.

If you have any questions about academic integrity and plagiarism, please ask.

OSAA Syllabus Statement on Accommodation

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

Course schedule

Week 1	Introduction – The Politics of war
September 6 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waltz, Kenneth. 1954. <i>Man, State, and War</i>. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chap. 1.
Week 2	The state and evolution of violence in the World
September 11 th , 2012 September 13 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steven Pinker, “A History of Violence.” Edge Master Class, 2011. http://edge.org/conversation/mc2011-history-violence-pinker. Themnér, Lotta and Peter Wallensteen. 2012. “Armed Conflicts, 1946-2011.” <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> 49 (4): 1-12.
Week 3	Causes of interstate wars – Individualistic factors I
September 18 th , 2012 September 20 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somit, Albert. 1990. “Humans, Chimps, and Bonobos: The Biological Bases of Aggression, War and Peacemaking,” <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 34 (3): 553-582. Gat, Azar. 2000. “The Human Motivational Complex: Evolutionary Theory and the Causes of Hunter-Gatherer Fighting. Part I. Primary Somatic and Reproductive Causes.” <i>Anthropological Quarterly</i> 73 (1): 20-34
Week 4	Causes of interstate wars – Individualistic factors II
September 25 th , 2012 September 27 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jervis, Robert. 1988. “War and Misperception.” <i>Journal of Interdisciplinary History</i> 18 (4): 675-700. Gross Stein, Janice. 1988. “Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception of Threat.” <i>Political Psychology</i> 9 (2): 245-271.

Week 5	Causes of interstate wars – Societal factors I
October 2 nd , 2012 October 4 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. “The clash of civilizations?” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 72 (3): 22-49. • Sen, Amartya, 2010. “Identity and Violence: The Violence of Illusion.” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ym12o1i2Mak

Week 6	Causes of interstate wars – Societal factors II
October 9 th , 2012 October 11 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allison, Graham T. and Morton H. Halperin. 1972. “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications.” <i>World Politics</i> 24: 40-79. • Bruce Russett and al. 1995. “The Democratic Peace: “And Yet It Moves” <i>International Security</i> 19 (4): 164-184.

Week 7	Causes of interstate wars – International system I
October 16 th , 2012 October 18 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fearon, James. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” <i>International Organization</i> 49 (3): 379-414. • Herz, John H. 1950. “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma.” <i>World Politics</i> 2 (2): 157-180.

Week 8	Causes of interstate wars – International system II
October 23 rd , 2012 October 25 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walt, Stephen M. 1985. “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power.” <i>International Security</i> 9 (4): 3-43. • Kugler, Jacek, and Organski, A.F.K. 1989. “The Power Transition: A Retrospective and Prospective Evaluation.” In Manus Midlarsky, <i>Handbook of War Studies</i>. Available at http://pluto.fss.buffalo.edu/classes/psc/fczagare/PSC%20346/Kugler%20and%20Organski.pdf

Week 9	*****Midterm exam*****
November 1 st , 2012	

Week 10	Causes of civil wars: Greed
November 6 th , 2012 November 8 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and grievance in civil war." <i>Oxford Economic Paper</i> 56 (4):563-595. • Fearon, James. 2005. "Primary Commodity Exports and Civil War." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 49, 4 (August 2005), 483-507.

Week 11	Causes of civil wars: Grievances
November 13 th , 2012 November 15 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 97 (1): 75-90. • Kaufman, Stuart. 2006. "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence," <i>International Security</i> 30 (4): 45-86.

Week 12	Non-traditional security issues
November 20 th , 2012 November 22 nd , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leander, Anna. 2005. "The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies." <i>Millennium - Journal of International Studies</i> 33: 803-826. • United Nations. 2010. <i>The Globalization of Crime. A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment</i>. Available at: http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/TOCTA_Report_2010_low_res.pdf

Week 13	Non-traditional security issues
November 27 th , 2012 November 29 th , 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pape, Robert A. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 97 (3): 1-19. • O'Connell, Mary Ellen. 2012. "Cyber Security without Cyber War." <i>Journal of Conflict & Security Law</i> 17 (2): 187-209.

Week 14	Conclusion
December 4 th , 2012	

Week 15	*****Final exam*****
TBD	