

**Government 85.29**  
**Lessons from America's Foreign Wars**

Prof. Jeff Friedman

Office hours: Mondays, 3:00-5:00pm

Silsby 224

**Dartmouth College**  
**Summer 2018**

MWF 2:10-3:15

x-period: Th 1:20-2:10pm

[Location TBA]

This class surveys prominent studies of United States military operations. We examine how scholars have attempted to inform public debates about these conflicts, and how those experiences have shaped broader conceptions of politics and war. How much (or how little) it is possible for scholars to learn from these experiences? What aspects of these experiences are academic methods best suited to address, and where have they come up short? We direct these questions towards a range of cases including Vietnam, Grenada, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. The goal of this class is to deepen students' substantive knowledge of military affairs while engaging broader questions about the possibilities and limits of analyzing controversial events.

Requirements: Class participation (25 percent); Class presentations (10 percent); Draft paper (5 percent); Final paper (60 percent).

The final paper assignment is to write a 15-20 page analysis of any controversial aspect of any U.S. armed conflict. Describe existing knowledge about this subject as thoroughly as you can, and then make a contribution to the debate. We will talk extensively in class about how to perform this kind of research, and students will receive feedback on both a prospectus and a draft paper.

Class meetings revolve around student presentations to generate discussion. Most classes begin with one student presenting a paper as if it were their own, emphasizing the paper's strengths and intended contributions. A second student will then serve as a "discussant," offering a critique of the paper's weaknesses. Each student will present and discuss one paper throughout the term.

Course readings are all posted online, along with discussion questions. Each session involves roughly 50 pages of reading. Most sessions focus on one academic article or book chapter. The course readings draw from a diverse range of authors, including political scientists, historians, economists, and foreign policy practitioners.

Students are expected to come to class having identified some specific strengths and weaknesses of the day's main reading. This kind of critical engagement is crucial to the course as we attempt to figure out what it takes to draw rigorous lessons from controversial events.

Please see the last page of the syllabus for additional course policies. Students are responsible for knowing these policies, as well as for adhering to Dartmouth's standards of academic integrity.

## **Course schedule**

Note that when page numbers are underlined, this indicates that only part of the article is required reading for class.

### **Unit 1. Lessons from Vietnam**

#### **1. Introduction**

Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?" *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Autumn, 2000), pp. 5-22.

#### **2. Escalating the war in Vietnam**

Leslie H. Gelb, "Vietnam: The System Worked," *Foreign Policy* No. 3 (Summer 1971), pp. 140-167

Fredrik Logevall, "Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 100-112

#### **3. Adapting to counterinsurgency in Vietnam**

Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (Basic Books, 2002), pp. 286-317

Gregory A. Daddis, "Eating Soup with a Spoon: The U.S. Army as a 'Learning Organization' in the Vietnam War," *Journal of Military History*, vol 77 (January 2013), pp. 229-254

#### **4. The Search for the Breaking Point in Vietnam**

Dale Andrade, "Westmoreland Was Right: Learning the Wrong Lessons from the Vietnam War," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (June 2008), pp. 145-56, 161-64, 173-75

John E. Mueller, "The Search for the 'Breaking Point' in Vietnam: The Statistics of a Deadly Quarrel," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (December 1980), pp. 497-519

#### **5. Exploring micro-level violence in Vietnam**

Matthew Adam Kocher, Thomas B. Pepinsky, and Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (March 2011), pp. 201-218

Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, "The Dynamics of Violence in Vietnam: An Analysis of the Hamlet Evaluation System," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (May 2009), pp. 335-355

## **6. Domestic politics and strategy in Vietnam**

Jonathan D. Caverley, "The Myth of Military Myopia: Democracy, Small Wars, and Vietnam," *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2001), pp. 5-44

*Optional:* James McAllister, "Who Lost Vietnam? Soldiers, Civilians, and U.S. Military Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11), pp. 95-123

*Optional:* Jonathan D. Caverley, "Explaining U.S. Military Strategy in Vietnam: Thinking Clearly about Causation," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11), pp. 124-143

## **Unit 2. International Interventions**

### **7. Planning the invasion of Grenada**

Ed Magnuson, Douglas Brew, Bernard Diederich, and William McWhirter, "D-Day in Grenada," *Time*, 7 November 1983, 9 pp.

Richard D. Hooker, Jr., "Presidential Decisionmaking and Use of Force: Case Study Grenada," *Parameters*, Vol. 21 (Summer 1991), pp. 61-72

Gilbert S. Harper, "Logistics in Grenada: Supporting No-Plan Wars," *Parameters*, Vol. 20, (June 1990), pp. 61-72

### **8. Understanding U.S. dominance in Desert Storm**

Stephen D. Biddle, "Victory Misunderstood: What the Gulf War Tells Us about the Future of Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Fall 1996), pp. 139-179

*Optional:* Thomas G. Mahnken and Barry D. Watts, "What the Gulf War Can (and Cannot) Tell Us about the Future of Warfare," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 151-162; Stephen Biddle, "The Gulf War Debate Redux," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 166-67, 170-73

### **9. Humanitarian intervention in the Balkans**

Alan J. Kuperman, "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (March, 2008), pp. 49-80

## **10. Multilateral Intervention in Libya**

Ivo H. Daalder and James G. Stavridis, "NATO's Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No. 2 (March/April 2012), pp. 2-7

Alan Kuperman, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Summer 2013), pp. 105-136

## **11. Drone Strikes in Pakistan**

Patrick B. Johnston and Anoop K. Sarbahi, "The Impact of Drone Strikes on Terrorism in Pakistan," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 60 (2016), pp. 203-219.

## **Unit 3. Afghanistan**

### **12. The invasion of Afghanistan**

Richard B. Andres, Craig Wills, and Thomas E. Griffith, Jr., "Winning With Allies: The Strategic Value of the Afghan Model," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005/06), pp. 124-160

Stephen D. Biddle, "Allies, Airpower, and Modern Warfare: The Afghan Model in Iraq and Afghanistan," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005/06). Read pp. 161-64. The rest is optional (but interesting and important nonetheless!)

### **13. Governance and corruption in Afghanistan**

Sarah Chayes, *Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security* (New York: Norton, 2015), pp. 22-27, 39-64, 135-148, 154-155.

### **14. The relationship between aid and security in Afghanistan**

Paul Fishstein and Andrew Wilder, *Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between Aid and Security in Afghanistan* (Medford, Mass.: Tufts University, 2012), 71pp.

## **Unit 4. Iraq**

### **15. Origins of the Iraq War**

Charles A. Duelfer and Stephen Benedict Tyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Summer 2011), pp. 73-100

## **16. The 2002 NIE on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction**

National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) 2002-16HC, *Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction* (October 2002), pp. 5-9

Robert Jervis, "Reports, Politics, and Intelligence Failures: The Case of Iraq," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 2006), pp. 3-52

## **17. Debating the Iraq War**

Chaim Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Summer 2004), pp. 5-48

Ronald R. Krebs and Chaim Kaufmann, "Selling the Market Short? The Marketplace of Ideas and the Iraq War," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Spring 2005), pp. 196-207

Frank Harvey, "Explaining the Iraq War," paper presentation at Centre for International Policy Studies, watch from 9:45 to 22:05.

## **18. Planning the Iraq War**

*Recommended:* Watch the first half of PBS Frontline's 90-minute documentary, "Losing Iraq"; stop around 45:00 when they begin to discuss the Surge decision. Despite the critical title, the film is a fairly objective description of key planning issues and problems the United States faced after the invasion.

Aaron Rapport, "The Long and Short of It: Cognitive Constraints on Leaders' Assessments of 'Postwar' Iraq," *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Winter 2013), pp. 133-171

## **19. The Invasion of Iraq**

Stephen D. Biddle, "Speed Kills? Reassessing the Role of Speed, Precision, and Situation Awareness in the Fall of Saddam," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (February 2007), pp. 3-46

## **20. Exploring Micro-Level Violence in Iraq**

Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter, "Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 119, No. 4 (August 2011), pp. 766-819

Skim: Luke N. Condra and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Who Takes the Blame? The Strategic Effects of Collateral Damage," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (January 2012), pp. 167-187

## **21. Casualties and Public Opinion**

Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler, "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005/06), pp. 7-46

*Optional:* Louis J. Klarevas, Christopher Gelpi and Jason Reifler, "Casualties, Polls, and the Iraq War," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 186-198

## **22. Deciding to Surge in Iraq**

Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Spring 2011), pp. 87-125

*Recommended:* Watch the second half of the PBS Frontline's 90-minute documentary, "Losing Iraq"; start around 45:00 when they begin to discuss the Surge decision.

## **23. Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007?**

*Skim:* Stephen Biddle, Jeffrey A. Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007?" *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Summer 2012), pp. 7-40

## **23. Paper Workshop**

In this class we will divide into groups to give feedback on drafts. You do not need to send feedback in advance, but please come to class prepared to give your groupmates' input on how they can improve their papers over the next two weeks. It would be courteous to spend 45-60 minutes learning about each of your groupmates' issues so that you can provide them with solid advice.

## **24. Did Enhanced Interrogation Work?**

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program*, Executive Summary (December, 2014). Read the summary of findings (before the table of contents), and then Section III.F, "The Eight Primary CIA Effectiveness Representations," pp. 217-310.

Central Intelligence Agency, *Comments on the Senate Investigation*. Read Brennan's preface and then the CIA's annex responding to the case studies in the SSCI report (pp. 2-21, starting on p84 of the [pdf](#)). You only need to read through the same eight case studies that were discussed in the reading above.

## **25. Conclusion**

Richard Feynman, "Cargo Cult Science," 1974 Caltech Commencement Address.

### **Course policies**

*It is important to start researching your final papers as soon as possible.* We will talk throughout the term about how to structure the research process, but the hard part for many students is simply identifying a tractable question to study, and this takes time. The final paper is expected to reflect at least one month of serious research on a specific subject.

*Class attendance* is required unless you have a scheduled commitment such as a job interview, performance, or competition. Please let me know well in advance if you will not be able to attend a class session.

*Grades.* Work that is "about the quality expected" from a Dartmouth undergraduate will receive a B+. As mentioned above, this expectation includes at least one month of serious research for the final paper.

*Academic honesty.* Students are responsible for understanding Dartmouth's rules on academic honesty.

*Extensions.* All written assignments will be posted online at the start of the term. Please do not ask for an extension unless you have encountered an unforeseeable emergency.

*Late submissions.* Late submissions receive a one-grade penalty (e.g., A- to B-) which recurs every 24 hours.

*Class participation.* Students should contribute to nearly every class discussion. Comments should generally revolve around specific aspects of the readings (or the broader debates they engage) rather than impressionistic reactions to material. Students will receive feedback on their class participation along with feedback on written assignments.

*Laptops.* Please do not use laptops in class.