

Dirty Wars

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2022-01-15

Prerequisites

This is the handbook for a course that I run at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. You will find all the administrative details for the course on KEATS. This includes, but isn't limited to: venues/timings for lectures and seminars, deadlines for assessments, my office hours/location. For your convenience, this handbook is available as a pdf file and as a static website.

- The pdf version of this handbook is [available here](#).
- The website version of this handbook is [available here](#).

0.1 Auditing

Usually I am fine with auditing, please email me if you would like to audit the module.

0.2 Tasks to Complete Before The First Class

- Important
 - Read chapter 2 on physical teaching arrangements and the notes for week 1 in the week by week guide in chapter 7
 - Check you have access to the readings for week 1 via the reading list link in KEATS
 - Do the readings
- Optional
 - Skim read the first two sections of this handbook
 - Add a picture of yourself to your KEATS profile, and to your KCL Microsoft Office profile
 - Perform the baseline reflection task in Chapter 9

0.3 Version History

- v1.0 (26/08/21): Initial Release.
- v2.0 (20/09/21): Updated seminars to include Dr David Bicknell.
- v3.0 (24/09/21): Updated seminars to include Dr Anna Plunkett.
- v4.0 (21/10/21): Updated seminars to reflect final seminars for Dr Mark Condos.
- v5.0 (15/01/22): Updated course outline to reflect final lecture structure and Dr Bicknell's seminar series.

Course Outline

1 Introduction

This chapter is designed to give you a big picture overview of the course, and a guide to using this handbook.

1.1 The Idea

Like it says on the tin, this module is about “dirty wars” in theory and practice. The idea for the course is to explore what can be learned about war by thinking through and examining a subset of conflicts that have been labelled “dirty wars” (or equivalent) by theorists and/or participants.

In formal terms, we will be studying the relationship between categories of political order, political violence, normative theory, and strategy. As a subset of that, the course focuses upon the role of institutions, organisations, and organisational perspectives in war and national security. In particular, how do ideas and cultural beliefs shape state bureaucracies responsible for national security? As a counter-point to this, we will also be looking at irreducible strategic dilemmas associated with war and national security. These derive from the adversarial relationship between states and those that seek to challenge them utilising clandestine means.

In less formal terms, this course is a trawl through some of the nastiest things that human beings do to one another. It explores the logics of mass killing and political repression, alongside a range of other kinds of atrocity. We will look at states killing people and claiming they are at war, states killing people while denying they are at war, and why these claims matter. In tandem, we’ll look at the bleed-through of intelligence collection and identification processes into everyday life and the political consequences of “securing the state.” It’ll be interesting, trust me.

The Course

This course is divided into a main lecture series, a research projects workshop, five research lectures, and 3 seminar series that run independent of the lectures. The lectures are designed to give the broad overview of the concepts and methods related to the study of dirty wars. The seminars focus upon particular topics taught as specialist subjects by the academic leading the seminar. For the structure of the teaching sessions see chapter 2, for the content of each teaching session see chapter 6.

Project Work

There are two projects that complement the course. These are designed to develop your individual research skills, as well as your group working skills. There is a book reading project, and a group project to develop a prototype for a research essay (to practice the skills needed for the final assessment). These are explained in chapter 7.

Assessments

The assessments for this course are a 2000 word literature review and a 4000 word research essay on a topic of your own choosing. I am open minded about your disciplinary approach/topic for the research essay so long as you can justify a connection to the course. The course is designed to enable you to perform both tasks. The assessed literature review comes after group work on a similar task, and guidance for the 4000 word essay is built into the lectures of term 2. Full details of the assessments can be found in chapter 8.

1.2 Course Expectations

Here is where I read you the riot act ahead of schedule. Just kidding. There is one hard and fast rule for this course: Stay in contact. I aim to be available via email Monday - Friday during normal work hours.¹ Please also be considerate of your fellow students when working together on group projects and don't expect them to be available outside normal working hours.²

The core reading for this module is intentionally short (usually 3 articles/chapters total per week), and this is the amount of reading that will enable you to engage with the course. There is online lecture material for some of the first 15 lectures on the course. This is weighted towards being heavy at the start, but should take you about 1 - 1.5 hours on average to watch through. I understand that not all students are able to dedicate 100% of their time during their MA to learning, so don't worry if circumstances mean you can't do the reading for a week. Try to catch up if you can, and email me if you get into trouble. That said, reading one article is better than nothing.³

As noted above, this course places a heavy emphasis on group learning (small group discussions, seminars, small group project). My starting assumption is that everyone is an adult, and is here to learn. I therefore expect that people will approach discussions and group work with respect for each other. In particular, please be aware that other students may have to balance their studies with work or care commitments. If you are unable to devise a way of working around such issues, please contact me.

You are expected to attend all teaching sessions. In the event that you are unable to attend a class, you must email the class convener.⁴

¹ That's 0900-1800 GMT. Generally speaking I process my inbox once a day. I may answer emails at other times, but please do not expect immediate replies at weekends.

² That's 0900-1800 GMT, Monday to Friday.

³ If circumstances mean that you can't watch all the lecture material or do all the readings for a given week, prioritise reading the seminar reading material and skimming through the lecture material.

⁴ These tasks are detailed in chapter 2

1.3 Privacy

Please respect the privacy of your classmates and do not make private recordings of seminars without my permission, either offline or online.⁵ If there is a need for recording, and you wish to make a point either off the record or under the Chatham House Rule, please indicate to the lecturer who will stop the recording for the duration of the contribution.

Some definitions:

Off the record - a point or contribution that should not be repeated outside the classroom, nor should it ever be attributed to the person who made it.⁶

Chatham House Rule - As [Chatham House](#) put it:

When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

So if someone draws upon their experience working as a human rights investigator and discusses their experience under the Chatham House rule, you are allowed to discuss what they say with other people, but you are not allowed to say who they are, who they worked for, or that you heard it in my classroom.⁷

1.4 Learning Resources

Tools

- KEATS: A Moodle platform that acts as a central hub for accessing learning resources, as well as essay submissions. Access using your KCL email address and password: <https://keats.kcl.ac.uk>
- TALIS: KCL's host for online reading lists. Here you will find links to the digital copies of readings used for the course. The structure mirrors the course outline in chapter 6 of this handbook.
- Padlet: A website that enables individuals to add/view material in real time. All you will need from this is to be able to open a web browser while using MS Teams for small group discussions.

⁵ KCL has a system of King's Inclusion Plans so that students with particular learning support needs may record teaching sessions. If there is a need to record sessions to enable equal access to the course then I will do so, which should obviate the need for individual recording.

⁶ This is a privilege of engaging in academic discussion. Making a pointlessly offensive comment is not covered by this privilege.

⁷ Note the third point about not revealing the identity of other participants...

Accessing Learning Resources

KEATS is the hub of this course. You will be added to KEATS automatically. You will find links to all the material for the course on KEATS.

For your convenience, there is a static website featuring links to the important everyday material for the course here: [site](#) Bookmark the page and you'll be able to access everything you need to study.⁸ Lecture slides are in HTML, so no need for powerpoint on your chosen device.

1.5 How To Use This Course Handbook

This handbook consists of four sections: Course Outline, Course Guide, Assessments & Projects, and Further Material.

The course outline consists of this chapter, plus the following chapter detailing the teaching arrangements for the course. These should give you everything that you need to know about how the course is structured and run, as well as outlining expectations about your preparation for teaching sessions and engagement with the course.

The course guide consists of an introduction to the teaching staff, a course outline, and a (long) chapter that gives week by week breakdowns of the teaching session topics, discussion questions, and readings for each teaching session. Together with the course outline, this should be all you need to get started on the course.

The assessments and group work section consists of two chapters: skills assessments, and group work.

The further material section contains optional extras to aid your independent study: skills development, further reading, case studies, and details of my research lab. The skills development chapter is optional, but will give you a sense of why the assessments and group work have been designed in this way, and may be of particular benefit to those who have not studied in the UK system before. The further reading is built from a cohort group project in 2019-20, and gives a lot more sources for you to follow up on particular dimensions of the course. The case studies exist to mirror the primary lecture series, so that if you are interested you can examine a single case study in depth, referring back to the theoretical discussions in this course. Lastly, I run a teaching and research lab to develop new teaching methods for transferring research skills. If you would like to join a research project, please check it out.

⁸ From student feedback, this is useful when watching lectures on a mobile device, or opening up lecture slides on a separate device

2 Physical Teaching Arrangements

Introduction

This course is designed for blended learning. It includes some online video material for flipped classroom teaching in some weeks. This course is designed to be delivered with physical teaching arrangements for 2021/22. In the event of having to switch to fully online learning, we'll work in the way described in the next chapter. This is the guide for preparing for physical teaching sessions.

2.1 Course Structure & Delivery

There are four types of activity on this course:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Projects
- Assessments

Lectures are a mix of lecture, small-group discussions, whole class discussions, and Q&A. Seminars are a mix of small-group discussions and whole class discussions. Projects are a mix of individual and group tasks that are designed to develop practical research skills. You have two marked assessments in the course, a literature review, and a review essay.

The blended version of this course combines online lecture material and in person lecture sessions and seminars. In the event of the course being switched to online-only delivery for any period of time, both classes of students will take the online version of the course for the duration of the switch.

2.2 Blended Learning

Lectures

There will be a mix of normal lectures and flipped classroom lectures, as indicated by the course outline.

In both cases, lectures are lecture/seminar sessions. That means that you will be engaging in small group discussion at points throughout the teaching session. You will be discussing questions in small groups (3-5 students), and recording key points on Padlet. I will call on groups to explain their agreement, or disagreement, over the answer to the question in a whole-class discussion after each small group discussion. I ask that a different person explains their group's discussion each time, so that this task does not fall on one person's shoulders.

Normal lectures are just what it says on the tin: a lecture where you turn up (having done the reading) and engage as above. There may be short (10 minute) videos accompanying some normal lectures, these are outlined in the week-by-week guide.

Flipped classroom lectures require you to view roughly 1 hour's worth of pre-recorded lecture material online prior to attending the lecture. The lecture session focuses upon applying these concepts to a case study, but otherwise runs as a normal lecture.

Seminars

Seminars run as small group discussions, leading to a class discussion. There are two questions each week. One is about the readings, the second is designed to connect the theory discussions to a case study. Again, please read the questions ahead of the session and consider your answer to them prior to the class.

If you are a remote student attending via Hyflex, these arrangements will be discussed in the first lecture.

3 Online Teaching Arrangements

For Reference Purposes Only

The course is currently in standard physical delivery mode. Please check the previous chapter for teaching arrangements.

Introduction

This course is taught physically, but is designed for blended learning. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a chance that this course might have to switch to online only learning in the 2021/22 academic year. This is your 1-stop guide to the teaching structure of the course in that eventuality. Here you will find structural details about online lectures and online seminars - the content of each lecture and seminar is detailed in chapter 6.

3.1 Course Structure & Delivery

There are two types of scheduled online learning on this course:

- Lectures
- Seminars

Online sessions will run via Teams. Please download and install MS Teams as soon as possible. Online teaching sessions are arranged by channel (Lectures, Seminars). Due to there being multiple seminar groups taking the course, each seminar group will have a letter corresponding to its timeslot (A, B, C, etc). There will be a Teams channel for each seminar group, please feel free to use it.

Both lectures and seminars will be scheduled by the course convener to appear at the same time as your timetabled seminars and lectures. There will be a link to these reoccurring seminars in KEATS.⁹

There will be a series of channels in the Teams page dedicated to breakout rooms. This is so that the lecturer can split the class into small discussion groups during the lecture or seminar. You should be able to see the channels for breakout rooms in Teams. The lecturer will start the meetings for these rooms prior to the lecture/seminar, and will instruct you as to which room to join. There is no need to exit the main lecture/seminar meeting to join a breakout room, joining a breakout room simply puts you on hold for the main meeting. If you accidentally quit out of a lecture/seminar or a breakout room, simply click on the channel in Teams and join the ongoing meeting.

Please mute your microphone upon entering teaching sessions on MS Teams. For lectures and Q&A sessions, I'll be taking questions via the chat function. I may call upon individuals to explain the question more fully to make sure that I get it right.

Chat etiquette:

- When asking about lecture material, please identify the slide number - this lets me put it up on screen so everyone can follow when I answer
- I'll go through questions in the order that they are received. If you have a follow on question, please identify it as such, e.g. "Following from Elizabeth's question" or "Following from your answer to Liam"

Lectures

The full lecture will be available online for you to view prior to the class. The online session in lieu of a physical lecture will take place on MS Teams, at the same time as the timetabled lecture.

The lecture session will start with a short case study as per the lecture guide, however the discussions will be moved to the end of the session.¹⁰

There are specific discussion questions for each lecture, please prepare your thoughts on these questions prior to the lecture session. Please also prepare one or more substantive points about one or more of the readings for the week. In short, the lecture session will mostly be active learning and small-group discussions, so please come prepared.

⁹ If the Teams seminar you are allotted does not correspond with your timetabled seminar, please contact Dr McDonald immediately to rectify the issue. Do not wait until the first seminar!

¹⁰ From experience, starting a teaching session with a discussion is much harder online than in person.

I will start the session with a short run-through of the material for Q&A purposes (e.g. we'll run through the lecture and make sure we're all on the same page). I'll then split the class into groups to discuss the problem for the week, and how the readings/lecture material has informed your thinking on the problem. Someone from each group should be allocated to give short feedback on the group's discussion via Padlet, which will be used by the lecturer to work through the issue in a full-group discussion. The class will then do a small-group discussion on the first discussion question, which will be followed by free discussion. We will then discuss the second discussion question.

Seminars

Each seminar group will be run as a webinar. The online session in lieu of a physical seminar will take place on MS Teams, at the same time as the timetabled seminar.

Each individual should prepare:

- A point about one or more of the readings for the week
- Their thoughts about the discussion questions for the week

At the start of each week, I'll clear the Padlet so that students can upload their point or reflection about the reading material. At the start of each seminar we will discuss some of the most interesting ideas or questions. We will then split into small groups to discuss the first discussion question, followed by a whole-seminar discussion. Again, please nominate someone from your breakout group to give feedback on the group's discussion on Padlet. This will be repeated for the second discussion question.

4 Reading and Preparation

Introduction

This is a practical guide to getting you started on the course, and to help you prepare for teaching sessions.

To sum up this entire section: Do the readings for each teaching session, prepare a point about the reading for each teaching session, reflect upon the problem and questions for the week before each teaching session, and do an asynchronous learning task if you have to miss a teaching session.

To make this more efficient as a guide, this chapter consists of a guide to preparing prior to the start of the course, preparation for each week of the course, and a wider guide to reading around or beyond the course.

4.1 Before You Start

Do I Need to Buy Anything?

No. The library should provide digital access to all core resources on the course.¹¹ There is one book that we will be reading extensively on the course this year: Helen Frowe's (2015) *The Ethics of War and Peace*. Feel free to get a head start on reading it as soon as you get the course guide.

Preparing for the Course

There are a couple of key concepts that we'll be using in this course a lot. If you are not familiar with them, you should try to familiarise yourself with them as soon as possible. By "familiarise" I don't mean "read ten articles on the subject", I mean understand the basic meaning of the word/phrase as it is generally used in discussions about war and national security. If you are unfamiliar with any of the following terms as they are used in strategic studies or security studies, here are quick links to chapters/articles that you can read.

- War. See Beatrice Heuser's (2010) *The Evolution of Strategy*, chapter 1
- Strategy. See Beatrice Heuser's (2010) *The Evolution of Strategy*, chapter 1
- Security. See Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen's (2009) *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, chapter 2
- National security. See David Omand's (2010) *Securing the State*, chapter 1
- Political repression. See, christian Davenport's (2007) *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*, chapter 1
- Violence. See Stathis N. Kalyvas' (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, chapter 1
- Legitimacy. See Andrew Hurrell's (2005) "Legitimacy and the Use of Force: Can the Circle Be Squared?" In *Force and Legitimacy in World Politics*
- Ethics. See Mark Timmons' (2013) *Moral Theory: An Introduction*, chapter 1
- Norm theory (International Relations). See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink's (1998) "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change."
- Intelligence. See Loch K. Johnson's (2017) *National Security Intelligence*, chapter 1

4.2 Preparing for Teaching Sessions

You will need to prepare for each teaching session (lectures and seminars). This means reading the assigned texts for the week prior to scheduled teaching sessions, and viewing or listening to the course material available online. Independent of whether a teaching session takes place in a physical classroom, or online, you will need to do roughly the same amount of work in order to prepare.

Weekly Checklist

- Have you done the readings?

¹¹ If you can't access something online, email me and I will solve the problem asap

- Have you viewed or listened to the online material for the teaching session?
- Have you read the outline for the teaching session, and reflected upon the questions for the week?
- Have you prepared a point about the readings?
- Are you able to attend the teaching session?
 - No?
 - Email the course convener

4.3 Reading for the Course

This course is designed so that it is, effectively, what you make of it. I won't be forcing anyone to submit assessed work in a discipline that they do not care for. The flipside of this freedom is that you are expected to get an understanding of how the different disciplines that the course engages with interact with one another. This section is designed to give you an idea of how to go about doing that, even though it is embedded into the core lectures for the course.

The Idea

What makes a war a "dirty war"? Why do some people state that some "dirty wars" in history were in fact instances of political repression, or one-sided violence, or state terrorism? This course examines the role that rules, and expected standards of conduct play in such questions.

The fundamental question underlying all of these is: What makes violence legitimate,¹² or illegitimate?¹³ Let's start with a basic unit of analysis: When is it right, or wrong, for the state to kill someone?¹⁴ Now let's take a step back: *How do people arrive at an answer to the previous question?* Typically the answer can be found in three inter-related disciplines. There's law, where national (constitutional) law and international law both regulate the conduct of states to some degree. There's morality, whether you want to think about a form of external objective morality, or social norms and customs. Then there's political science and political theory, where we find discussions about the effective and/or proper limits of state authority and the use of force by state agents.¹⁵ We find concepts running through all three disciplines, like justice, but we also find significant differences.

¹² Oxford English Dictionary definitions: "Conforming to the law or to rules." or "Able to be defended with logic or justification; valid."

¹³ OED: "Not authorized by the law; not in accordance with accepted standards or rules."

¹⁴ Over the course we'll be talking about violence beyond killing, and things like torture which some people consider to be worse than killing. We'll also be talking about actions short of killing which some people nonetheless consider to be harmful or wrong.

¹⁵ Like: Should the death penalty exist?

One such difference is the idea of status. For example, in moral philosophy we're usually talking about the relations between individuals, but political theory is very much concerned with relations between states and citizens. Citizenship can confer different rights, depending upon the legal system, but international human rights law contains the idea that there are human rights possessed by individuals regardless of their country of citizenship. The law of armed conflict contains a whole bunch of different categories of person - combatant, civilian, etc - which denote whom it is lawful to attack in an armed conflict, and who is off limits. As such, a lot of what we will be talking about is not only the legitimization of violence, but expectations of status, and resulting expectations of behaviour.

This means that a particular feature of this course will be its focus upon the competition between multiple frames of evaluating, justifying, excusing, explaining, or criticising the use of violence. The question is therefore not so much "Did *x* do wrong to *y*?" but how different ways of evaluating the actions of *x* can give entirely different answers. A key commonality of the course is therefore the "is/ought" problem in the context of war and political violence.¹⁶ By this, I mean the way in which we jump from the empirical analysis of human behaviour to normative standards by which we judge said behaviour. However, and this is important, there is a world of difference between the "should" that one encounters in moral philosophy, and the "should" that one encounters in strategic theory.

Okay, So How Do We Explore That?

Read a book. Or, rather, pick a perspective that interests you from the list below, and read the relevant book over the Christmas break.

- Strategic thought or strategic studies, read one out of: Beatrice Heuser's (2010) *The Evolution of Strategy*, Colin S. Gray's (2010) *The Strategy Bridge*, or Lawrence Freedman's (2015) *Strategy: A History*.
- Security studies, try Barry Buzan's (2007) *People, States & Fear*.
- International relations, try Vivienne Jabri's (2010) *War and the Transformation of Global Politics*.
- Political violence, try Christian Davenport's (2007) *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*.
- Political theory, try Judith Butler's (2016) *Frames of War*.
- War, try Stathis N. Kalyvas' (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, or Christopher Coker's (2009) *War In an Age of Risk*.
- Ethics, read Helen Frowe's (2015) *The Ethics of War and Peace*.¹⁷

¹⁶ This construction is taken from David Hume, who made the point better than I could a couple of hundred years ago. See (Cohon 2018)

¹⁷ Sharp-eyed readers will note that we're reading this anyway for the course this year, so it's a fall-back position by default

- International law, try reading Stephen C. Neff's (2014) *Justice Among Nations*. If you are doing the International Peace & Security MA, you might want a more technical book, so try Gary D. Solis' (2016) *The Law of Armed Conflict*.
- The lecturer's opinion,¹⁸ try Jack McDonald's (2017) *Enemies Known and Unknown*.

After you've picked a book/subject, start picking it apart for the following clusters of questions:

- The problem and legitimacy of violence
- Power structures and objects of analysis
- Knowledge and uncertainty
- Ideas and objectivity

The Problem and Legitimacy of Violence

A good way to read a text through on a first pass is to keep in mind the problem of violence. Or, rather, read the text to see if the author frames violence as a problem, and how central the concept of violence is to the argument that they are making. In some texts, violence might be the central object of concern, in others, violence might be an important factor, in others, it might be a secondary issue. Moreover, some texts will depict violence as aberrant, whereas in some disciplines, the fact of violence and violent interactions is taken as something of a given.

The point here is that we might be concerned with violence, but violence is not the central concern of many texts or disciplines in which violence features as a concern or problem. Even though article 2(4) of the UN Charter and international humanitarian law are uber-important in international relations, we should keep in mind that reading international law for issues related to the use of force is a bit like skinny-dipping in a discipline.

A second concern is to read the text for the structure of legitimate force, if it exists. By this, I mean that each will text will have something to do with the legitimacy or illegitimacy of violence. Most texts contain some discussion of what makes violence legitimate, or from a more neutral perspective, legitimate to participants. Some texts, however, won't contain a "pro" violence argument. The absence of such an argument doesn't necessarily mean the author is a pacifist, more that their work doesn't seek to provide a legitimating structure for violence.

Power Structures and Objects of Analysis

A second cluster of questions you should keep in mind while reading a text is the way in which it defines, or assumes, power structures or relations between agents. Does, for example, the text take the problem of adversity seriously? Or, rather, how are people or states meant to respond to hostile opponents? Again, the absence of answers to adversaries doesn't necessarily indicate ignorance, rather a different perspective on the matter.

¹⁸ Hey, some people are interested in that sometimes...

Bear in mind that relationships between adversaries and agents may be completely implicit in a text. For example, states are often treated as equals in the big-S sense that States form an international system of States. That said, in many cases discussion of power relationships and hierarchies will focus upon particular asymmetries or differences, e.g. the relations between states and rebels, or discussion of the role of violence in hegemonic or post-colonial world orders. The point here is to read a text for both its presumptions of equality and inequality, alongside the way it frames particular power relations or structures. Depicting a pair of states as entirely free to choose how they relate to one another not only presumes the equality of the actors, but also brackets out the power structure implicit in the context of international society.

As a last set of issues to consider in this cluster, you should read the text to understand the ontology it is mapping out. Does, for instance, it talk about social groups, or social networks? Is the worldview of the text cosmopolitan - taking individuals as equal regardless of things like citizenship or community, or are the building blocks social institutions like military organisations or states? How does, for example, the text describe the relationship between individuals and social groups? How complex are the social relationships under consideration? Bear in mind that any single piece of analysis by definition foregrounds some social features and flattens or sidelines a whole bunch of social complexity.

Knowledge and Uncertainty

What assumptions does the text you've chosen make about knowledge? This is a big topic. The best way to approach it for this course is to read your text for its treatment of uncertainty. For example, does it even consider the uncertainty, or does it presume knowledge of certain features of the world? Given that imperfect information and epistemic uncertainty are constitutive factors in political conflict or war,¹⁹ does your chosen text engage with these problems, or largely avoid them?

The point here is that some disciplines are essentially built upon a worldview of human fallibility and ignorance. Strategic studies and intelligence studies wouldn't really exist in a world of omniscient hominids. Other disciplines, for instance moral theory, acknowledge the imperfections of the "real" world, but the bulk of the discipline is built upon discussions where facts under consideration can be fixed for the purposes of discussion. This isn't to diss the latter category of disciplines, but each approach serves as a mirror to the other.

Ideas and Objectivity

The last set of questions to consider relate to the role of ideas. Some people think ideas are really powerful, that they shape our whole world. Other people think ideas matter, but that there are underlying structures that are independent of ideas themselves. It is extraordinarily difficult to compare and contrast the role of ideas across disciplines. You should, however, read your chosen text with an eye for the impact, if any, that human ideas

¹⁹ And that's before you get to disagreements over the interpretation of facts...

and the imagination are meant to have on the world around us. Do shared sets of ideas and concepts constitute our reality? Moreover, what role does the text presuppose for the reconstitution of reality via changing ideas? Will, for example, persuading everyone of some idea make for a better world? How?

A key element to consider here is the role that objectivity plays in your selected text. Often objective or universal positions are presented as somehow value neutral. The text you have chosen might equally be an open or veiled criticism of this kind of abstract universal thinking.²⁰ So in a wider sense while reading your text for the role of ideas, it is often a good idea to note where and how discussions of objectivity and subjectivity fit into the structure of the work, or discipline, and why that is so.

Dirty Wars: Course Guide

5 Teaching Staff

Introduction

The course will be taught by Dr Jack McDonald, Dr Mark Condos, Dr David Bicknell, and Dr Anna Plunkett. Dr McDonald is the course convener, and therefore should be your first point of contact for questions about the course. Dr Condos, Dr Bicknell and Dr Plunkett will be running one seminar series each this year, and any questions about the content of that series (difficulty with texts, suggested further readings, etc) should be communicated to the relevant seminar convener.

5.1 Jack McDonald

Dr Jack McDonald is a senior lecturer in war studies at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. He is the author of two books examining the relationship between the law and ethics of war, and emerging technology. His first book, *Ethics, Law and Justifying Targeted Killings* (Routledge), examined American justifications for drone strikes and targeted killings during the Obama administration. His second book, *Enemies Known and Unknown* (OUP/Hurst), analysed the relationship between law, technology, and strategy in America's "transnational armed conflict" with al-Qaeda and demonstrated the key role law plays in the constitution of war.

Dr McDonald's research examines the relationship between ethics, law, technology, and war. He takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of war and warfare, and is primarily interested in the philosophical questions underlying the regulation of warfare both in the present and the past. He is currently researching the role of ICTs in the generation of ethical debates, working towards a book project on data ethics in armed

²⁰ Sometimes universal pretence masks underlying power dynamics, etc.

conflict. This is part of a wider research project on power and political violence in digital societies, and the role of tradition in Anglo-American warfare.

5.2 Mark Condos

Dr Mark Condos is a historian interested in the intersections between violence, race, and law within the British and French empires, with a particular focus on India and Algeria.

His previous research has examined the relationship between militarism, violence, and state-building in colonial Punjab and along the North-West Frontier of British India. This work explored how colonial anxieties, fears, and vulnerabilities played an important role in determining the authoritarian and often violent practices of the British colonial state.

Mark has also written extensively on the phenomenon of 'fanaticism' along the North-West Frontier of British India, tracing the colonial origins of some of the key legal and discursive tropes in contemporary engagements with terrorist violence.

He is currently working on two different projects. The first examines how various forms of legal and extrajudicial violence were incorporated by the British and French empires in their attempts to police different frontier regions, with particular emphasis on the ways that Indian revolutionaries used the tangled legal geography of British and French India to carry out their activities in the early 20th century. The second project looks at how concepts of prestige, dignity, and honour informed imperial practices of retributive violence, and the ways that imperial powers attempted to justify these within legal, moral, and other normative frameworks.

5.3 David Bicknell

Dr David Bicknell is a visiting research fellow in the Department of War Studies. He recently completed his PhD in January 2021. He has a professional background as a commercial lawyer at a leading City law firm in London from 1992-2015, specializing in international finance. His thesis, *A penumbra of war: The use of lethal force in British military operations in internal armed conflicts* used a multi-disciplinary approach encompassing international law, history and strategy to investigate the legal basis adopted by the British Army for the use of lethal force in internal armed conflicts from the Jamaica Rebellion in 1865 to the Iraq War, 2004-09.

5.4 Anna Plunkett

Dr Anna Plunkett is a lecturer in international relations in the Department of War Studies. Her research focuses on the role of local elites as mediators and obstacles within nationally led regime transitions. She is interested in how the presence of such alternative authority structures impact and create subnational variation within regime transitions. Her primary interests include conflict and democracy at the sub-national level, understanding how various political orders are impacted by transitions at the sub-national level.

Anna's main area of focus is Myanmar's ethnic borderlands and ongoing conflicts in the region. She has previously worked as a human rights researcher focusing on military

impunity and its impact on the community in Myanmar. Over the past few years, she has worked on several large research projects and has conducted field research evaluating Bosnia's post-war recovery twenty years after the Dayton Peace Accords. She works as a strategic consultant and trainer with NGOs and CSOs in South East Asia building capacity and sustainability within small organisations.

Anna is currently the Editor in Chief of [Strife](#), the academic blog of the Department of War Studies, and have founded the Women in Writing and BA Internships Programme.

6 Course Overview

Introduction

The Dirty Wars module features a number of overlapping components. These are:

- The core lecture series (terms 1&2) that examines the concept of “dirty war” and the relationship between war and political repression. This is taught by Dr Jack McDonald.
- A research projects workshop, designed to enable you to successfully complete the research essay assessment.
- A series of 4 research lectures (term 2) that apply these concepts to contemporary warfare and international security. These are delivered by Dr McDonald, and guest lecturers.
- Two applied lectures, on cases selected by students, to explain how the concepts covered by the course can help us to understand contemporary issues of war and national security.
- Four seminar series designed to explore an element of the main course at depth in a specific disciplinary context.
 - Weeks 1-4 | Categorising war and warfare (Dr McDonald), this series examines the issue of conflict classification and its relationship to war and warfare. As such it provides a way of considering the relationship between the exercise of defining war and the conduct of war itself, notably in “hybrid” or “grey zone” conflicts.
 - Weeks 5-8 | Colonial Violence (Dr Condos), this seminar series examines colonial violence and the insight that it can provide into core concepts in security studies. The seminar is structured around Dr Condos' book, *The Insecurity State: Punjab and the Making of Colonial Power in British India* - Condos (2017). The seminar series therefore also gives students the time and space to do close reading of a single text.
 - Weeks 9-12 | Intelligence ethics and just war theory (Dr McDonald), this series examines the emergence of the field of intelligence ethics, its interaction with just war theory, and the challenges of defining ethical behaviour in the intelligence world.
 - Weeks 13-16 | Self Defence in Concept and Practice (Dr Bicknell), this series of seminars explores the concept of self defence in both theory and practice.

The seminar series is designed to give students experience of using theory to inform the analysis of case studies and the messy reality of the use of force in conflict zones.

- Weeks 17-20 | Sovereignty and Violence in Myanmar (Dr Plunkett. This seminar series is designed so that students can examine the relationship between power and violence in a single case study from multiple angles. It is tied to Dr Plunkett's lecture on the subject so that students can spend the seminars using what they have learned over the course to analyse the role violence and coercion plays in the governance of Myanmar.
- Week 21 | Wrap up (Dr McDonald), the last week of seminars gives students the chance to reflect on what they have learned over the course of the year.

The Core Lecture Series: What Makes a War a 'Dirty' War?

This is an 15 lecture series on the concept of "dirty war." This series with a "toolset" for ways of thinking through what counts as a war, how people and institutions judge/justify wars and warfare in normative terms, and the connection between the two. Please note that the lectures will be about two thirds lecture, and one third small group discussion/full cohort discussion.

Lectures:

- War and Dirty Wars
- War and Political Order
- Restraint in War
- Strategy and Population Control
- Historicising Dirty Wars
- Political Warfare and Political Repression
- Half Light Wars and Clandestine Warfare
- Human Dignity and Political Community in War and National Security
- Citizenship in War and National Security
- Status in War & Sexual Violence in Conflict
- The Shock of the Old
- Identity, Identification, and Intelligence Organisations
- Targeted Killings
- Detention
- Torture

Research Projects Workshop

In this workshop we will be discussing the design of research projects. I will be explaining and guiding you through one of my research projects that relates to the course to demonstrate how to undertake a small self-defined research project. This is in order to prepare you for the final evaluation for this module: writing a 4000 word research essay.

Research Lecture Series: Dirty Wars and Contemporary Warfare

The research lecture series is designed to complement the main course. Unlike lectures in the main series, there are no online lectures to view prior to the class. This is so that you have more spare time to dedicate to the module's assessment.

Lectures:

- War and Violence in Myanmar (Dr Anna Plunkett)
- Revenge, Retribution, and Reciprocity in War (Dr Mark Condos)
- Martial Law (Dr David Bicknell)
- War Powers and Contemporary Warfare

6.1 Applied Lectures

The last two lectures of the year are dedicated to specific cases/topics chosen by students on the course.

7 Course Week-By-Week Guide

Introduction

This is the week-by-week guide to the course. Each section gives you a short outline of the lecture topic, and the seminar topic, for you to consider before watching the lecture material and reading for the week. The discussion questions are what we will be discussing during teaching sessions, so please consider your answers to these questions, alongside preparing for the teaching sessions as per chapter 2.

7.1 Week 1 (w/c September 27th)

Course Notes

- Welcome to the course!
- There is no online lecture material to view ahead of schedule for this week - just do the single reading, and further additional reading if you have time.

Lecture: War and Dirty Wars

This week is a “gentle introduction” to the course. We’ll be covering course admin, as well as setting ground rules for learning/seminar discussions. This week’s lecture also serves as an introduction to the course itself, notably the idea that we’ll be using and examining over the first two thirds of the course. This, in a nutshell, is my own definition of “dirty wars” and what makes them interesting to study:

Dirty wars are conflicts where one or more parties to the conflict denies the political, legal, and/or moral status or standing of their opponents.

The importance of this definition is where the *expectations* of status and standing come from. In particular, this course will engage with the construction of necessity claims. That is, the reasons for which states (and their opponents) claim it is sometimes, or always, necessary to deny the status or standing of their opponents.

This lecture introduces a couple of important frames where necessity claims are an integral feature of the frame itself: war and national security. This isn't to say that these are the only frames with which to examine the kind of conflicts the course covers, but they are important in that they often guide state responses to threats.

- Discussion Question:
 - Is the “War on Terror” a war? When did it start? Has it ended?
- Core Reading:
 - Smith, M. L. R., and Sophie Roberts. “War in the gray: exploring the concept of dirty war.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, no. 5 (2008): 377–398.
- Additional Reading:
 - Barkawi, Tarak. “Decolonising War.” *European Journal of International Security* 1, no. 2 (2016): 199–214.
 - French, David. “Nasty not nice: British counter-insurgency doctrine and practice, 1945–1967.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 23, no. 4–5 (2012): 744–761.

Seminar: War as a Concept

This is the opening seminar on conceptualising and classifying conflicts. For the next 7 weeks we will be looking at how academics categorise and classify war and armed conflict across disciplines. In this seminar we'll be discussing a very basic point: what is war, and why do academics arrive at different conceptualisations of the same subject matter. It's good to also consider our own starting points, so the seminar will also enable us to discuss our own prior understandings of the concept of war.

- Discussion Questions
 - What differences are there in how “war” is conceptualised between the readings? Why do you think these differences occur?
 - How does your own understanding of what war is differ from the definitions of war provided in these readings?
- Core Reading:
 - Wright, Quincy. *A Study of War*, The University of Chicago Press, (1942). Chapter 17.
 - Sarkees, Meredith Reed, “The COW typology of war: Defining and categorizing wars.” *The Correlates of War Project*. (2010). [URL](#)
 - Haines, Steven. “The Nature of War and the Character of Contemporary Armed Conflict,” in *The Classification of Conflicts*, edited by Elizabeth Wilmschurst. Oxford University Press, (2012).

7.2 Week 2 (w/c October 4th)

Course Notes

- There are two short videos for this week (roughly 20 minutes of material total) to view prior to the lecture.

Lecture: War and Political Order

In this lecture we will examine the relationship between political orders and rules that govern political violence. National security presumes the existence of a nation, and these days, a nation state. This session looks at the connection between political authority, community, and coercive means of defending the former (supposedly on behalf of the latter) against internal threats. The reason this matters for this course is that we now pre-suppose the nation state as the standard type of polity in international politics, when empires dominated until the early-mid 20th century. We'll look at what an "internal threat" looks like in the context of Empire, and how might this give us a better understanding of the concept of national security that is so important to the present day.

The second half of this lecture covers a range of explanations for rule-breaking hostility in conflict, primarily focused upon internal conflicts. These explanations range from those rooted in ideas and ideology, to power relations, to strategic dilemmas facing insurgents and underdogs in asymmetric conflicts. Two key ideas that this lecture will cover are political enmity, and political ethics that lead to dehumanisation and/or escalation.

- Discussion Question:
 - What kinds of dilemmas might be inherent to defending or challenging a political order?
- Core Reading:
 - Tang, Shipin, "Order: A Conceptual Analysis." *Chinese Political Science Review* 1, (2016): 30-46.
- Additional Reading:
 - Kaldor, Mary. *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. 3rd ed. Polity Press, (2012). Chapter 2
 - Mary L. Dudziak, "Law, War, and the History of Time." *California Law Review* 98, no. 5 (2010): 1669-1710.

Seminar: Conceptualising Civil War

In this seminar we will be discussing the book reading task. This seminar will therefore be a mix of reflection on our ability to understand authors' arguments from reading books, as well as an evaluation of the argument in Stathis Kalyvas's *Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Of particular importance to the course is how and why Kalyvas chooses to define civil war

- Discussion Questions:
 - How did your understanding of the book's argument evolve over the reading task? What was the most important turning point, and why?

- What problems might there be in applying Kalyvas' definition of civil war to wars in the contemporary world?
- Core Reading:
 - Kalyvas, Stathis N. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, (2006).

7.3 Week 3 (w/c October 11th)

Course Notes

- There is 1 short video to watch for this week's lecture (10-15 minutes)

Lecture: Restraint in War

This lecture examines theories of restraint in war in order to situate examinations of status in the following three weeks. The lecture will examine cover explanations of restraint in war and the core sets of rules that govern contemporary discussions of right and wrong conduct in war.

This lecture covers the evolution of ideas that are now taken as standard — even self-evident — explanations for why dirty wars are wrongful by definition. We will pick over the origins of and differences between concepts like “humanity”, “humanitarianism”, and “human rights”. We will also look at two different logics of restraint in conflict as found in the ideas of Francis Lieber and Henri Dunant, in order to compare them to ideas of restraint that originate in human rights, and human rights law.

An important theoretical point that complements this discussion is the emergence of the individual-as-centre in the normative evaluation of war. The “individualisation of war” is a horrible phrase, but an important emerging field of interdisciplinary study. The importance of these ideas for this course is that the intersection of individual rights and categories of permission for/protection from violence arising from war is quite unsettled, and the analysis of dirty wars provides a means of thinking through these questions from an unusual perspective.

- Discussion Question:
 - Do you agree more with Francis Lieber, or Henri Dunant? Why?
- Core Reading:
 - Lazar, Seth. “Just War Theory: Revisionists Versus Traditionalists.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017): 37–54.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-060314-112706>.
- Additional Reading:
 - Neff, Stephen C. *Justice Among Nations: A History of International Law*, Harvard University Press, (2014).
 - Milanović, Marko. “A norm conflict perspective on the relationship between international humanitarian law and human rights law.” *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 14, no. 3 (2009): 459–483.

Seminar: Classifying Conflicts

Conflict classification is a key element of international law approaches to analysing the use of force in war/armed conflict (read the readings to understand why the different terms are important!). In order to analyse the lawfulness of force, one must first determine whether an armed conflict exists, and what type of armed conflict it is. In this seminar we'll discuss how what problems dirty wars and irregular warfare poses for this core activity, and how difficult classification is in practice.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Do you think that all wars can be classified as international armed conflicts and non-international armed conflicts? What are the implications of your answer?
 - What relevance does the author's classification of the conflicts in the DRC have relative to states' classifications?
- Core Reading:
 - Bartels, Rogier. "Timelines, borderlines and conflicts: the historical evolution of the legal divide between international and non-international armed conflicts." *International Review of the Red Cross* 91, no. 873 (2009): 35-67.
 - Akande, Dapo. "Classification of Armed Conflicts: Relevant Legal Concepts," in *The Classification of Conflicts* edited by Elizabeth Wilmshurst. Oxford University Press, (2012).
 - Arimatsu, Louise. "The Democratic Republic of the Congo 1993–2010," in *The Classification of Conflicts* edited by Elizabeth Wilmshurst. Oxford University Press, (2012).

7.4 Week 4 (w/c October 18th)

Course Notes

- This week's lecture session is a flipped classroom. Please view the lecture material online prior to the lecture.

Lecture: Strategy and Population Control

This lecture covers population control as a way of thinking about the logic of dirty wars. This session revisits the concept of strategy, with a particular focus upon the problems of applying strategic theory to wars and conflicts without battles. We'll cover how strategic theorists and practitioners have tackled this problem in the past.

The lecture is organised around the perceived problem of controlling populations, in particular drawing upon the ideas of John C. Wylie.²¹ We will look at the tools of coercion that states use to control restive populations. This class primarily focuses upon physical

²¹ Fun fact: This emphasis is inspired by the PhD research of Dr Nick Prime, who took this course back in 2012/13.

control — notably driving people away, moving populations around, or corralling them into camps — whereas later weeks will cover forms of ideological control and political warfare. These obviously can't be separated in theory or practice, but it's necessary to focus like this for lectures to make the scope of topics manageable. In addition, we'll look at the role that physical violence plays in producing conditions of fear and complicity in populations.

Case: Concentration Camps

In the physical lecture we will look at one of the key features of modern conflicts: concentration camps and large penal systems. The lecture will examine the colonial origins of these camps in detaining people for public health purposes, alongside the segmentation of civilian populations or detention of prisoners of war for military purposes. As a case study, the lecture will examine the evolution of the Nazi *Konzentrationslager* system in both peace and war.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Is it possible to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable forms of population control? How?
 - Are there instances of individual extrajudicial detention, mass internment, or population control that you have encountered in your reading that you consider to be justifiable? Why?
- Core Reading:
 - Ucko, David H. "'The People are Revolting': An Anatomy of Authoritarian Counterinsurgency." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 1 (2016): 29–61.

Seminar: Manipulating Conflict Thresholds

In the final seminar on the conflict categorisation seminar series, we'll look at how conflict classification can impact the conduct of war itself. Contemporary uses of military force are often tailored with legal standards of conflict thresholds in mind. Here, we'll look at the use of military force in ways that appear to intentionally fall short of war.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Are the standards of conflict classification in international law politically neutral?
 - How should states respond to opponents that attempt to utilise conflict thresholds to attain their strategic aims?
- Core Reading:
 - Hughes, Geraint. "War in the Grey Zone: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Implications." *Survival* 62, no. 3 (2020): 131-158.
 - Sari, Aurel. "Hybrid Warfare, Law and the Fulda Gap." in *Complex Battlespaces: The Law of Armed Conflict and the Dynamics of Modern Warfare*, edited by Winston S. Williams and Christopher M. Ford. Oxford University Press, (2019): 161-190.

7.5 Week 5 (w/c October 25th)

Course Notes

- There is 1 short video to watch for this week's lecture (10-15 minutes)
- This week is the start of Dr Mark Condos' seminar series on colonial violence

Lecture: Historicising Dirty Wars

In this week's lecture we will look at how transformations in both the internal character of political units (the emergence of modern states) and the international system (the rise and decline of European empires) contributed to the generation of what we might now call dirty wars. The lecture will revisit the concept of political order so as to examine its relationship with international order. This is particularly relevant for considering the emergence of modern universal expectations of state conduct after World War 2. In so doing, the lecture will also examine the rise of centralised bureaucratic states, in order to understand the rise of what might be the epitome of dirty wars themselves - bureaucratic forms of political violence and warfare.

- Discussion Question:
 - To what extent are dirty wars little more than a reflection of the standards of international order?
- Core Reading:
 - Osterhammel, Jürgen. *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton University Press, (2015). Chapter 8.

Seminar: (In)Security and The Garrison State

In this seminar series, we will interrogate the relationship between (in)security, authoritarianism, law, state power, and violence, through an examination of British India. In particular, we will look at how British colonizers frequently resorted to claims about the threats they faced in India (both real and imagined) in order to justify the enactment of a deeply oppressive and authoritarian system of rule. In our first week, we examine the origins of British colonial insecurity through the ways India was represented as a place of perpetual turbulence, danger and emergency. This, in turn, justified the establishment and expansion of the coercive apparatuses of the state, particularly the military.

- Discussion Questions:
 - How did the army come to occupy such a pre-eminent position within colonial India?
 - Is there a difference between state power and state violence?
 - Do you think the construction of India as a place of permanent danger and emergency a cynical power play, or was this a genuinely held belief?
 - Was colonial India a 'military despotism'?
- Core Reading:

- Condos, Mark. *The Insecurity State: Punjab and the Making of Colonial Power in British India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017). Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Peers, Douglas M. *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in India 1819-1835*. London: I.B. Tauris, (1995). Chapter 1.

7.6 Week 6 (w/c November 1st)

Course Notes

- This week's lecture session is a flipped classroom. Please view the lecture material online prior to the lecture.

Lecture: Political Warfare and Political Repression

A defining feature of many dirty wars is the way in which they blend into police action, or, more specifically, political repression under a “law enforcement” banner. Moreover, dirty wars are often characterised by the resort to emergency powers, and repressive legislation. This lecture examines the problem that subversion and insurgency poses to states, and explanations for the resort to emergency powers by government authorities. Specifically, we'll focus on state security institutions that conduct counter-subversion and seek to identify/disrupt subversive political movements. We'll look at common dilemmas present in democratic societies, notably relating to surveillance, and the political implications of this activity.

Case: Counter-Insurgency in Vietnam

In the lecture we'll look at how the concepts of political warfare and political repression can be found in counter-insurgency. The lecture will look at the various forms of political repression that took place during the Vietnam war, how they related to counter-insurgency, and the manner in which the self-image of counter-insurgency re-framed these activities in a manner amenable to democratic states.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What types of political actors can/can't commit political repression?
 - How open should democracies be about counter-subversion?
- Core Reading:
 - Earl, Jennifer. “Political Repression: Iron Fists, Velvet Gloves, and Diffuse Control.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 261–284.
- Additional Reading:
 - Davenport, Christian. “State Repression and Political Order.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007): 1–23.

Seminar: Executive Authority and Emergency

On the afternoon of 17 January 1872, a Punjab officer summarily executed 49 Sikh ‘rebels’ by blowing them from the mouths of artillery guns. Although the officer claimed that this swift and terrible reprisal had prevented a minor outbreak from spiralling into a full scale

'rebellion', his actions sparked a heated debate in both India and Britain about the extent to which colonial officials had the right to transgress written laws and procedures in order to safeguard the colonial regime in times of 'crisis' or 'emergency'. While critics claimed that this response had been induced by 'panic' and was utterly excessive, supporters argued that the ever present danger of rebellions and 'fanatical' conspiracies in Punjab and India justified these types of harsh and exemplary measures. This week, we will look at the ways that discourses of 'emergency' were central to the enactment and justification of brutal forms of colonial violence, and the tensions this created with the notion of the 'rule of law'. In particular, we will examine the deeply entrenched beliefs that characterized the so called 'Punjab school' of governance, which emphasized the untrammelled executive power of the 'man on the spot.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What is the logic behind exemplary spectacles of punishment?
 - Can we usefully conceive of the colonial world as a zone of permanent exception? What are some of the strengths, and weaknesses of such an approach?
 - Was British rule in India based on the rule of law?
- Readings:
 - Condos, Mark. *The Insecurity State: Punjab and the Making of Colonial Power in British India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017). Chapter 3.
 - Hussain, Nasser. *The Jurisprudence of Emergency: Colonialism and the Rule of Law*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, (2019). Chapter 1.

7.7 Week 7 (w/c November 8th)

Course Notes

- There is 1 short video to watch for this week's lecture (10-15 minutes)

Lecture: Half Light Wars and Clandestine Warfare

This lecture will draw together discussions of secrecy and warfare throughout the course to examine open-secret conflicts in the present day. We will be looking at the history of secrecy in war, and theories that explain the use of non-acknowledged military force by states. Building upon this we will consider how many of the issues covered in this course can enable us to analyse the epistemic dimensions of war itself. Lastly the lecture will look at some emerging bodies of work on proxy warfare and surrogates, as well as the key issue of regulating secret warfare in democracies.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Who or what does determine the existence of or non-existence of a given war?
- Core Reading:
 - Carson, Austin. *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics*, Princeton University Press (2018). Chapters 1 & 2.
- Additional Reading:

- Van Veeren, Elspeth. “Secrecy’s subjects: Special operators in the US shadow war”. *European Journal of International Security*, 4, no. 3 (2019): 386-414.

Seminar: From ‘Fanatics’ to Terrorists

This week, we examine the history of one of the most brutal minded and draconian laws ever created in colonial India: the ‘Murderous Outrages Act’ of 1867 (MOA). This law gave colonial officials along the North-West Frontier of India wide powers to transgress judicial codes in order to summarily execute and dispose of individuals identified as ‘fanatics’ who assaulted or murdered British personnel. Sporadic attacks of this nature began shortly after the British assumed direct control of the frontier in 1849, and occurred right up until Indian Independence in 1947. These attacks terrified the colonial establishment, highlighting the vulnerability, weakness, and inability of the colonial regime to protect its own in what was seen to be one of the most dangerous and ‘turbulent’ regions within the whole of the British Empire. Although justifications for this law ultimately hinged on the purportedly ‘exceptional’ nature of the frontier, we will look at how its legacies extend well beyond the region, and provided a sort of model for similarly ‘repressive’ legislation enacted during the height of the revolutionary nationalist movement in the twentieth century, particularly through construction of the category of the ‘terrorist’.

- Discussion Questions:
 - To what extent was anti-colonial resistance against the British Empire motivated by religion?
 - How did the creation of new legal categories expand the coercive powers of the colonial state?
 - Did the law ultimately enable or limit the use of British violence in India?
 - Why did the British fixate on ghazism and ‘fanaticism’ as ‘culture-bound’ pathologies?
 - Are there lessons we can learn from historic attempts to contain ‘fanatical’ violence when it comes to thinking about the contemporary ‘War on Terror’?
- Readings:
 - Condos, Mark. *The Insecurity State: Punjab and the Making of Colonial Power in British India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017). Chapter 4.
 - McQuade, Joseph. *A Genealogy of Terrorism: Colonial Law and the Origins of an Idea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2020). Chapter 1.

7.8 Week 8 (w/c November 15th)

Course Notes

- This week’s lecture session is a flipped classroom. Please view the lecture material online prior to the lecture.

Lecture: Human Dignity and Political Community in War and National Security

This lecture explores the concept of human worth in war and national security. Simply put, why does it matter if a state (or a non-state actor) kills someone? This week we will be

covering the emergence of ideas of universal moral standing, notably the concept of human dignity as an explanation of inherent moral standing. We will also cover the development of the idea of citizenship and political status, notably the development of ideas of universal political rights within a given state or political system, and cosmopolitan ideas of universal rights.

The importance of the above for the course is twofold. First is to place the course into historic context - at what point was political, legal, and/or moral status the expectation?²² The second is to provide an understanding of the role that these expectations play (or do not play) in judgements of right and wrong in international politics. This also provides a good point to consider the implications of the course, which is the function that normative judgements play in the judgement of, explanation of, and justification for political violence.

Case: The Coalition Campaign Against ISIS

The physical lecture will examine the role of human dignity and political community in debates about military force, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in the campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Are members of ISIS who have committed genocide, slavery, rape, and/or war crimes still “owed unconditional respect”? What would you say to someone who would deny them such respect?
 - Is it right or wrong for political leaders to value the lives of their own citizens above the lives of non-citizens?
- Core Reading:
 - Schabas, William A. “Origins of the genocide convention: From Nuremberg to Paris.” *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 40 (2007): 35.
- Additional Reading:
 - Van Schaack, Beth. “The Definition of Crimes Against Humanity: Resolving the Incoherence.” *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law* 37 (1999): 787.

Seminar: Policing Global Protest

For our final seminar, we look at how the recruitment and employment of Punjabi soldiers and policemen in Britain’s overseas colonies became a source of chronic insecurity and vulnerability for the Government of India. Although most historians have emphasized the numerous benefits that Punjabi police and military labour provided to the wider empire, this same recruitment and movement of Punjabis overseas also created new challenges and problems for the Government of India. Whether it was fears that the popularity of overseas service was sapping the strength of the Indian Army and weakening its ability to defend against a potential Russian invasion through Afghanistan; rumours that Punjabis were

²² Spoiler alert: I’m going to say “After the Second World War at the earliest, and there’s a good case for starting in the 1970s.”

taking up military service with Britain's European imperial rivals; or the panic caused by the return of radicalized ex-servicemen under the banner of the Ghadar Party during the First World War, the use of Punjabi military and police labour actually became a source of chronic colonial anxiety and insecurity. This acute sense of imperial vulnerability, in turn, prompted new forms of coercive political and legal intervention on the part of the colonial state, including the notorious 1915 Defence of India Act.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Why did the Indian revolutionary nationalist movement assume such a transnational/global character?
 - In what ways did the First World War open up new opportunities for the expansion of executive power and authority in India?
 - Was the rule of law suspended during the First World War?
 - Giorgio Agamben identifies the First World War as a crucial turning point in the emergence of a permanent state of exception as a tool of global statecraft. Do you agree this model fits with the example of India? Why, or why not?
 - Why did the Ghadar 'revolution' fail to materialize in Punjab? Was it a real threat to British power, or merely a chimera?
- Readings:
 - Condos, Mark. *The Insecurity State: Punjab and the Making of Colonial Power in British India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017). Chapter 5 and Conclusion.
 - Sohi, Seema. *Echoes of Mutiny: Race, Surveillance and Indian Anticolonialism in North America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2014). Chapter 5

7.9 Week 9 (w/c November 22nd)

Course Notes

- There is 1 short video to watch for this week's lecture (10-15 minutes)
- The intelligence ethics seminar series starts with Dr Jack McDonald starts this week

Lecture: Citizenship in War and National Security

One kind of protective status or identity that we will consider in this course is citizenship. How does political and legal membership of a polity give individuals rights, and how do states explain the voiding of the protections of citizenship in conflict?

In this lecture we will examine the relationship between citizens, states, and state security institutions charged with ensuring national security. In particular we'll be looking at the problem of political enmity involving a state's own citizens. As such the lecture will cover a variety of issues, such as the unilateral removal of citizenship by state authorities, as well as the rule of law in political emergencies.

- Discussion Question:
 - Is revoking the citizenship of suspected terrorists an act of cowardice?
- Core Reading:

- Hack, Karl. “Everyone lived in fear: Malaya and the British way of counter-insurgency.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 23, no. 4–5 (2012): 671–699.

Seminar: Intelligence Ethics

The first seminar in this series examines the concept of intelligence ethics. Is it possible to be ethical in the intelligence space? Or does the duty to collect and provide intelligence to decisionmakers outweigh moral concerns about the means of doing so? Intelligence ethics has emerged as a distinct field since 9/11, often drawing upon concepts from just war theory to understand and examine the moral issues involved in espionage and intelligence collection. Here we will examine two early works in this movement to look at how the field has established itself.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Is there a difference between the ethics of domestic intelligence and the ethics of foreign intelligence?
 - Do organisation types (police, military, intelligence agencies) matter in intelligence ethics?
- Readings:
 - Erskine, Toni. “‘As Rays of Light to the Human Soul’? Moral Agents and Intelligence Gathering.” *Intelligence and National Security* 19, no.2 (2004): 359-381.
 - Gendron, Angela. “Just War, Just Intelligence: An Ethical Framework for Foreign Espionage.” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 18, no.3 (2005): 398-434.

7.10 Week 10 (w/c November 29th)

Course Notes

Lecture: Status in War & Sexual Violence in Conflict

An important class of constraints that are meant to protect individuals from harm derive from the laws of war, or the law of armed conflict. This class of legal status, however, is tied to the existence of a war or armed conflict. In this lecture, we’ll be covering three modes by which the protective aspect of the law of armed conflict can be denied: by denying the existence of a war, by categorising individuals as permissible targets, and via the internal logic of the law of armed conflict itself.²³ In addition we’ll be looking at the reverse: how the declaration of the existence of war, and reliance upon its permissive aspects, is used to override other statuses that protect against violence.

Building upon this, we’ll examine the recognition of sexual violence in conflict as a war crime to understand the role of power and politics in determining who gets to define wrongful action in conflict (or to ignore it), and the implications of this for the normative

²³ Notably proportionality calculations

frameworks that legitimise violence in wars. Following from this, this lecture will examine the role gaps, lacunae, and silences play in the regulation of violence. In particular, we'll be discussing the wider implications of this way of thinking, with reference to Miranda Fricker's concept of *epistemic injustice*.

- Discussion Question:
 - Which of the descriptive, causal, and normative issues associated with sexual violence in conflict do you find most troubling? Why?
- Core Reading:
 - Gottschall, Jonathan. "Explaining wartime rape." *The Journal of Sex Research* 41, no. 2 (2004): 129–136.
- Additional Reading:
 - Baaz, Maria Eriksson, and Maria Stern. "Why do soldiers rape? Masculinity, violence, and sexuality in the armed forces in the Congo (DRC)." *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2009): 495–518.
 - Grossmann, Atina. "A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers." *October* 72 (1995): 43–63.

Seminar: Just and Unjust Intelligence

In this seminar we will be looking at two works that compare the evolution of contemporary work on just war theory and intelligence ethics. Importantly, we'll look at how intelligence ethics has drawn concepts from just war theory. In so doing, we'll discuss the promise and pitfalls of interdisciplinary research, as well as the issues of drawing concepts into new fields of inquiry.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Does just war theory make sense as a basis for intelligence ethics?
 - How different are the depictions of what constitutes just war theory between the two readings?
- Readings:
 - Lazar, Seth. "Just War Theory: Revisionists Versus Traditionalists." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017): 37–54.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-060314-112706>.
 - Ronn, Kira Vrist. "Intelligence Ethics: A Critical review and Future Perspectives." *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 29, no.4 (2016): 81-102.

7.11 Week 11 (w/c December 6th)

Course Notes

- Literature review will be due January 10th

Lecture: The Shock of the Old

This lecture examines the continued use of raids, sieges, starvation, and slaughter in contemporary warfare. In this session we will examine attacks upon infrastructure as a means of warfare and its continuing relevance for contemporary conflict. The lecture will focus upon the conflicts in Iraq and Syria to examine the degree to which modern-day attacks upon civilian infrastructure differ from those of the past.

- Discussion Question:
 - Is coercion possible without implicitly threatening civilians?
- Core Reading:
 - Thomas, Claire. "Civilian Starvation: A Just Tactic of War?", *Journal of Military Ethics* 4, no. 2 (2005): 108-118.
- Additional Reading:
 - Howe, Cymene, Jessica Lockrem, Hannah Appel, Edward Hackett, Dominic Boyer, Randal Hall, Matthew Schneider-Mayerson, et al. "Paradoxical Infrastructures: Ruins, Retrofit, and Risk." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 41, no. 3 May (2016): 547-65.
 - Power, Susan. "Siege Warfare in Syria: Prosecuting the Starvation of Civilians," *Amsterdam Law Forum* 8, no. 2 (2016): 1-22.

Seminar: Intelligence Harms

In this seminar we will discuss the notion of harm, and the harms caused by intelligence collection and surveillance. Here we will examine the analysis of harm internal to the field of intelligence ethics, as well as what gets included in the scope of intelligence activity.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What is the harm of intelligence collection?
 - Is it possible to distinguish between different classes of harms caused by intelligence collection?
- Readings:
 - Bellaby, Ross. *The Ethics of Intelligence: A New Framework*. Routledge, (2014). Chapter 1.
 - Pfaff, Tony and Tiel, Jeffrey R. "The Ethics of Espionage." *Journal of Military Ethics* 3, no. 1 (2004): 1-15.
 - Diderichsen, Adam and Rønn, Kira Vrist. "Intelligence by consent: on the inadequacy of Just War Theory as a framework for intelligence ethics." *Intelligence and National Security* 32, no. 4 (2017): 479-493.

7.12 Week 12 (w/c January 17th)

Course Notes

Lecture: Identity, Identification, and Intelligence Organisations

This week focuses on a key element of dirty wars — bureaucratic security institutions. These institutions, developed to monitor and combat internal threats, are key to understanding the types of violence that occur in dirty wars, so we'll be looking at the connection between different types of polity, and the institutions that they developed to combat perceived threats. In particular, we will focus on the development of formal intelligence institutions, both domestic and foreign, as a response to perceived threats. This is important for a couple of reasons. One is that institutional perspectives shape state responses to threats, the second is that many dynamics of the conflicts covered in this course can't be understood without reference to conflicts and competition between state security institutions.

- Discussion Question:
 - To what extent do intelligence institutions shape government perceptions of conflict?
- Core Reading:
 - Higgs, Edward. "The Rise of the Information State: the Development of Central State Surveillance of the Citizen in England, 1500-2000." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 14, no. 2 (2001): 175–197.
- Additional Reading:
 - Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, (1998). Chapter 3.
 - Clutterbuck, Lindsay. "Countering Irish Republican Terrorism in Britain: Its Origin as a Police function." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18, no. 1 (2006): 95–118.

Seminar: Privacy and Intelligence

Privacy harms are a key issue in intelligence ethics. At the same time, the very definition of privacy is often hard to agree upon. In this seminar we will look at the work of two key authors to examine different conceptualisations of privacy, and what these differences might mean for how we think of both privacy harm, and for the use of privacy within the field of intelligence ethics.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of Solove's approach to the concept of privacy?
 - How well is privacy theorised in intelligence ethics?
- Readings:
 - Solove, Daniel J. "A Taxonomy of Privacy." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 154, (2005-2006): 477.

- Nissenbaum, Helen. “Privacy as Contextual Integrity.” *Washington Law Review* 79, (2004): 119-158.

7.13 Week 13 (w/c January 24th)

Course Notes

- Dr David Bicknell’s seminar series on self defence starts this week

Lecture: Targeted Killings

This lecture examines the concept of one-sided violence and asymmetry in conflict. Here I’ll locate what is called targeted killing - the use of violence against specific individuals — in the wider context of asymmetric violence in war, and similar asymmetries found in terrorism and political repression. We will discuss how and why are some people singled out for violent death in warfare, and how that relates to the normative frameworks we’ve encountered over the course. In particular, we will be drawing heavily from the seminar series of the course, and the relationship between individuals, social groups, and war/warfare. Targeted killings are important not because they kill many people (at least in comparison to what this course has covered), but because they draw attention to the processes of identification and categorisation that can be viewed as standard targeting practices, or extrajudicial death sentences. Furthermore, the justifications for targeted killings outside of armed conflict have highlighted the importance of state justifications for lethal force in self defence.

- Discussion Question:
 - Is it more disturbing to intentionally kill people whose identities you know, or people you only know via their status?
- Core Reading:
 - McDonald, Jack. *Enemies Known and Unknown: Targeted Killings in America’s Transnational Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2017). Chapter 7
- Additional Reading:
 - Carvin, Stephanie. “The Trouble with Targeted Killing” *Security Studies* 21, no. 3 -carvin2012: 529–555.
 - McDonald, Jack. “Decapitation, Repression, or Cauterisation? The problem of categorising targeted strikes” in *Handbook of Terrorism and Counter Terrorism Post 9/11* edited by David Jones, Paul Schulte, Carl Ungerer, and M.L.R. Smith. Edward Elgar Publishing, (2019).

Seminar: Self Defence: Theory in armed conflicts

One of the core objectives of international relations theory is to explain and account for the causes of war or armed conflict and the use of armed force by states in the international system. International law may then determine the legality of the armed conflict and the use of force whilst moral philosophy may offer normative insights into what was done, or not done. Together, these quite different fields of study contribute to an assessment of the legitimacy of a particular act. In this seminar, we will discuss the main theoretical bases for analysing the political, legal and moral approaches to a particular and controversial

example of use of force: the air strikes in Syria carried out in 2018 by the United States, the United Kingdom and France in response to reported use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime. Before the seminar, please do some research on the factual background of the air strikes, e.g. these news sources:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-43762251>
- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKBN1HJ0ZS>
- Discussion Questions:
 - Which international relations theory do you think provides the most persuasive explanation of US and UK air strikes in Syria in 2018 in response to the reported use of chemical weapons by Syrian government forces, and why? What is the implication of your choice for your analysis of the legality or illegality of the air strikes?
 - On what basis would you argue that the air strikes were legal or illegal under international law?
- Readings:
 - David Armstrong, Theo Farrell and Hélène Lambert, 'Three lenses: realism, liberalism, constructivism' in David Armstrong, Theo Farrell and Hélène Lambert, *International Law and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2012), Ch. 3 pp. 69 - 114. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511808753.004>
- Additional Reading:
 - David Rodin, *War and Self-Defense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, (2002) [link](#)
 - (Refresher - Reading from Week 3) Lazar, Seth. "Just War Theory: Revisionists Versus Traditionalists." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017): 37–54. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-060314-112706>.

7.14 Week 14 (w/c January 31st)

Course Notes

- Please ensure that your group's research prototype is submitted by February 4th. This is in order for me to prepare them for the research projects workshop.

Lecture: Detention

Detention is a key feature of both war and national security. The laws of war provide for good treatment of detainees, but this is the end result of a complicated history that has also generated the requirement to detain, rather than execute, captured opponents. This lecture will examine this evolution, alongside the history of detention in law enforcement situations and for the purposes of political repression and mass murder. As we will see, one of the key features of dirty wars are where norms of detention are violated, or where legal requirements are altered in the face of national security threats. Lastly, the lecture will

cover the issue of overlapping detention regimes, notably the debates regarding the military detention of terrorist suspects in Guantanamo Bay.

- Discussion Question:
 - What threshold conditions could justify the use of military detention in the context of insurgency and revolution?
- Core Reading:
 - MacKenzie, S. P. "The Treatment of Prisoners of War in World War II." *The Journal of Modern History* 66, no. 3 (1994): 487–520.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2124482>.
- Additional Reading:
 - Smith, Iain R., and Andreas Stucki. "The Colonial Development of Concentration Camps (1868-1902)." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 3 (2011): 417–437.

Seminar: Self Defence: The use of force by States

Under *jus ad bellum* there are two generally accepted exceptions to the prohibition on the use or the threat of use of force in international relations set out in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. The use of force must either be authorised by the United Nations Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter or constitute an act of self-defence falling within Article 51 of the Charter. Traditionally, the lawfulness of a State's use of force under *jus ad bellum* has been separated from the lawfulness of the use of force by combatants under *jus in bello*/international humanitarian law. Under *jus in bello*, the rules on the conduct of hostilities apply mutually and so it is lawful for a combatant to kill an enemy combatant irrespective of whether the combatant's State is engaged in a lawful use of force under *jus ad bellum*. Periodically, this traditional separation has been questioned and it has recently been raised again by the United Nations' Human Rights Committee. In this seminar we will discuss how the limitations on the agency of States to use force at their own volition operates to justify or deny the legality of the use of force in State practice.

- Discussion Questions:
 - How would you assess the Kosovo Commission's conclusion that 'the NATO military intervention was illegal but legitimate'? What would you (a) like, and (b) expect to be done if a similar humanitarian crisis were to occur in Europe and what would be the potential political, legal and/or moral consequences of your chosen response?
 - Do you think that the traditional separation of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* which provides the basis for the mutual application of combatant privilege in respect of killing the enemy should be maintained? If not, what are the implications of your answer for the conduct of hostilities, humanitarian intervention or peacekeeping?
- Readings:
 - Yoram Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017) Ch. 6 (or the 2012 edition)

- Independent International Commission on Kosovo. 2000. The Kosovo report: conflict, international response, lessons learned (Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2000)
<https://www.law.umich.edu/facultyhome/drwcasebook/Documents/Documents/The%20Kosovo%20Report%20and%20Update.pdf>
- UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), ‘General comment no. 36, Article 6 (Right to Life)’, 3 September (2019), CCPR/C/GC/35
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CCPR_C_GC_36_8785_E.pdf
- Additional reading
 - Yoram Dinstein, War, Aggression and Self-Defence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017) – the rest of Part II (either edition)
 - David Rodin, War and Self-Defense (Oxford: Clarendon Press, (2002)

7.15 Week 15 (w/c February 7th)

Course Notes

Lecture: Torture

You may be forgiven for wondering why torture features toward the end of the lecture series, not the start. My reason for placing it here is twofold. First, from experience, if torture features early in the course, then everyone focuses upon the topic of torture for essays, discussions, etc. As a topic, it tends to crowd everything out for the simple reason that it covers some of the most reprehensible things that humans do to each other. However, and secondly, you’ll have better discussions about the topic having spent the previous weeks discussing the wider aspects of the course. This class examines rationales for the use of torture, and the emergence of “torture for information” as a key debate in contemporary politics. The lecture will cover issues of definition, and “torture lite.” We will also look at the institutional context of torture, particularly in light of the idea of denial of standing — who decides whether a person should be tortured, how, and why? Such questions are key to understanding contemporary debates.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Can you define a particular element of torture that you find more disturbing than others?
 - Can you know if torture “works” or not? How would such knowledge alter your opinion of the use of torture?
- Core Reading:
 - Wolfendale, Jessica. “The Myth of “Torture Lite”.” *Ethics & International Affairs* 23, no. 1 (2009): 47–61.
 - David Luban, “Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb,” *Virginia Law Review* 91, no. 6 (2005): 1425-1462.

Seminar: Self Defence: The use of force by individuals

Justifications for the use of force by individuals in the conduct of hostilities and law enforcement. The use of force in military operations is bifurcated by the distinction between its use in armed conflict and law enforcement. In armed conflict, the laws of war/international humanitarian law regulates the use of force and its restrictions are generally explained as an attempt to strike a balance between military necessity and humanity. However, if there is no armed conflict, the paradigm of law-enforcement is said to apply which is generally understood to limit the use of force to self-defence. It is sometimes said that the use of lethal force in self-defence should only be used as a last resort although what this means is not entirely clear. In this seminar, we will consider the parameters within which State forces should be held accountable for killing in the course of internal security operations.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Is there a rule of ‘capture not kill’ in armed conflict and, if so, what kind of obligation does it create? If there is not, should there be?
 - How should we understand the political, legal and ethical distinctions between the use of force by State forces in armed conflict and in law-enforcement?
- Readings:
 - Nils Melzer, ‘Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law’, ICRC, May (2009). <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0990.pdf>. In particular, Sections V, VI, VII and IX.
 - W. Hays Parks, ‘Part IX of the ICRC “Direct Participation in Hostilities” Study: No Mandate, No Expertise, and Legally Incorrect’, *NYUJIntlL&Poll*, 42 (2010), 769-830. <https://nyujilp.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/42.3-Parks.pdf>
 - United Nations, ‘Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials’ (New York, (1990). <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/useofforceandfirearms.aspx>
- Additional Reading:
 - Michael N. Schmitt, ‘Deconstructing Direct Participation in Hostilities: The Constitutive Elements’, *NYUJIntlL&Poll*, 42 (2010), 697-739. <https://nyujilp.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/42.3-Schmitt.pdf>
 - King’s College London, Centre for Military Ethics, ‘Playing Cards’, sub-set ‘Laws of War’. <https://militaryethics.uk/en/playing-cards/military>
- Refresher reading:
 - David Rodin, *War and Self-Defense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, (2002)
 - Milanović, Marko. “A norm conflict perspective on the relationship between international humanitarian law and human rights law.” *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 14, no. 3 (2009): 459–483.

7.16 Week 16 (w/c February 7th)

Course Notes

- The lecture session this week will involve discussion of, and feedback on, the research prototype projects
- Please take time to consider what you would like to do for your final assessment prior to attending this class

Lecture: Research Projects Workshop

In this session we will be discussing the case study projects and research essay assessment. This lecture focuses upon the development of research projects from the identification of interesting research problems and puzzles. The session will start by going over the recorded material about research skills, and then there will be some feedback about the case study projects. We will use these projects to prototype a research design that would make for a good research essay, and discuss any questions about the essay assessment.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What makes an academic research project worth doing?
 - To what extent is a “research puzzle” necessary for the research essay that you wish to do?
- Readings:
 - Gustafsson, Karl, and Linus Hagström. "What Is the Point? Teaching Graduate Students How to Construct Political Science Research Puzzles." *European Political Science* 17, no. 4 (2018): 634–48.
 - Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman. "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield." *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (February (2007): 170–95.

Seminar: Self Defence: Case Study - Iraq

Justifications for the use of collective or individual force. The Iraq War led to a series of official inquiries in the UK culminating in the Chilcot Report and it has also been said to have led to a storm of litigation with much of it questioning the lawfulness of the conduct of British military operations. One of the main themes of the various official reports into Iraq has been to ask what lessons can be learned from the experience. In this seminar, we will discuss what lessons you think can be learned and what they mean for the conduct of future military operations in Dirty Wars.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What are the mechanisms by which the State and its forces (on the one hand) and non-State actors and members of their armed groups (on the other) have been held to account for their actions in Iraq? Who do you think should be held to account, for what and how?
 - Taking the various investigations and reports as a whole, what lessons do you think they suggest for the conduct of military operations in Dirty Wars?

- Readings:
 - International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor, 'Situation in Iraq/UK: Final Report', 9 December 2020 <https://www.icc-cpi.int/itemsDocuments/201209-otp-final-report-iraq-uk-eng.pdf>
 - *Al-Skeini and Others v United Kingdom*, Application No. 55721/07, ECtHR, 7 July 2011 <https://www.refworld.org/pd/fid/4e2545502.pdf>
- Iraqi Fatalities Investigations:
 - 'Investigation into the death of Ali Naser' dated 8 February 2017 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595986/1080_WL_Iraq_FAT_Cm9410_Rpt_Death_of_Ali_Naser_Web_2.pdf
 - Consolidated Report into the death of Nadheem Abdullah and Hassan Abbas Said dated March 2015 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414766/47516_Iraq_Text_Accessible_COMPLETE.pdf
- Additional Reading:
 - Iraqi Fatalities Investigations, Report into the death of Muhammad Abdul Ridha Salim dated March 2016 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510216/Report_into_the_death_of_Muhammad_Salim_ACCESSIBLE.pdf
 - Claire Mills and Joanna Dawson, 'Briefing Paper: Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Bill 2019-21, House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper No. 8983, 22 September (2020) <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8983/CBP-8983.pdf>
 - Brereton Report – Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force, 'Report of Inquiry into Questions of Unlawful Conduct concerning the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan', published on 10 November 2020, Section 1.01 'Introduction and Executive Summary', pp68-127 – It is about the Australian Defence Force in Afghanistan but useful for comparison. <https://afghanistaninquiry.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/IGADF-Afghanistan-Inquiry-Public-Release-Version.pdf>

7.17 Week 17 (w/c February 21st)

Course Notes

- Dr Anna Plunkett will be giving the lecture this week
- Dr Anna Plunkett's seminars start this week

Lecture: Sovereign Violence and Legitimacy in Myanmar: Is Myanmar at War?

In the final lectures on the course, we'll be looking at how the study of dirty wars can help to improve our analysis of key issues in contemporary warfare. This lecture

Myanmar has the longest ongoing civil war in the world. Beginning prior to Myanmar's independence and still ongoing the conflict has continued for over sixty years. But how does Myanmar's conflict measure up? By many international measures it does not. This lecture will discuss the challenges of analysing and interpreting protracted conflicts. It will outline the implications this has had on the legitimacy and protections offered to both conflict parties and conflict-affected communities.

- Discussion Question:
 - How should we understand the terminology of war and conflict within protracted conflict settings?
- Core Reading:
 - Thawnghmung and Htoo (2021) The Fractured Centre: 'Two-headed government' and threats to the peace process in Myanmar, *Modern Asian Studies*, pp.1-29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X20000372>
- Additional Reading:
 - South, A. "Burma's Longest War: Anatomy of the Karen Conflict." Special Reports. *Transnational Institute*, (2011). <https://www.tni.org/en/briefing/burmas-longest-war-anatomy-karen-conflict>
 - Alam, J. 'The Rohingya of Myanmar: theoretical significance of the minority status.' *Asian Ethnicity* 19, no.2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2017.1407236>

Seminar: Minority Rights

Myanmar is an ethnically diverse country. Whilst the centre of the state is majority ethnically Bamar the borderlands remain 'homelands' to Myanmar's ethnic minorities. The division of these two regions has colonial origins that have continued to dominate the political landscape within Myanmar. Today, there are 8 national races and 135 officially recognised ethnic groups within Myanmar. In this seminar we will discuss the use and relevance of divide and rule strategies as a form of control and security within contemporary Myanmar. We will question the ethical and strategic implications of minority rights and minority rights policies. We will debate their use as a protective and progressive measure within ethnically diverse states. Finally we will look at the treatment of recognised versus unrecognised populations within the state of Myanmar to outline the challenges in achieving equality within diversity.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Do minority rights and recognition offer protections to populations?
 - How has the use of divide and rule changed overtime? Is it still a relevant way to analyse security policy in Myanmar?
- Core Reading:
 - Taylor, R.H. 'Do States Make Nations?: The Politics of Identity in Myanmar Revisited', *South East Asia Research* 13, no.3 (2005). <https://doi.org/10.5367/000000005775179676>

- Additional Reading:
- Cheesman, N. 'How in Myanmar "National Races" Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya', *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 47, no.3 (2017) pp. 461-483.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2017.1297476>
- Ho, E. L. and Chua L. J. 'Law and 'race' in the citizenship spaces of Myanmar: spatial strategies and the political subjectivity of the Burmese Chinese.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39, no.5 (2016) pp. 896-916.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1081963>

7.18 Week 18 (w/c February 28th)

Course Notes

- Dr Mark Condos will be giving the lecture this week

Lecture: Revenge, Retribution, and Reciprocity in War

Political hatred is part and parcel of war. A key problem in internal conflicts are the cycles of revenge and political repression that follow from victory on the battlefield. This lecture examines the role that retribution and payback plays in war and warfare more generally. Many forms of retribution, for example reprisals, have historically played a significant role in promoting adherence to shared rules of conduct. At the same time, retribution can also lead to the escalation of conflicts both in scale and intensity. The lecture will therefore look at the role that retribution and revenge can play in containing and escalating conflict.

- Discussion Question:
 - Can revenge in war be a good thing?
- Core Reading:
 - Miller, William Ian. *Eye for an Eye*. Cambridge University Press, (2005). Chapter 2.
- Additional Reading:
 - Walen, Alec. "Retributive Justice." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, (2016).
<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/justice-retributive/>
 - McDermott, Rose, Anthony C. Lopez, and Peter K. Hatemi. "Blunt Not the Heart, Enrage It': The Psychology of Revenge and Deterrence." *Texas National Security Review* 1, no. 1 (2017).

Seminar: Split Sovereignty

The majority of Myanmar's conflict affected communities have inter-generational experiences of war with limited to no state led engagement. Overtime insurgent groups have developed their own systems of governance developing and providing not only protection but healthcare and social services to the communities within their regions. This has created a marketplace for authority and undermines the sovereignty of the central state. In this seminar we will discuss the roles played by insurgent groups and question the role and impact such authorities have on the communities they claim to represent. We will

look at how such authorities disrupt traditional relationships between the state and society and the implications of such disruptions. We will further analyse the impact this split in sovereignty has on communities, outlining how communities adapt within insecure environments.

- Discussion Questions:
- What does Mampilly's interpretation of insurgent governance tell us about the role and actions of rebel groups?
- Should insurgents be seen as alternatives to state authorities within civil war contexts?
- Core Reading:
- Mampilly Z. (2015) *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, Cornell University Press. Chapter Two: The Unweildly taxonomy of rebel governed areas pp.25-47. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7zfvj.7>
- Additional Reading:
- Oh S. et al 'Karen Education and Boundary Making at the Thai-Burmese Borderland' *Journal of Borderland Studies* 36, no.4 (2021), pp. 637-652. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2019.1685401>
- KHRG 'State Repression and the creation of poverty in southern Karen State' Field Report #2007-F2 (2007) <https://khr.org/2007/02/khr07f2/state-repression-and-creation-poverty-southern-karen-state>
- Mikael Gravers, "A Saint in Command? Spiritual Protection, Justice, and Religious Tensions in the Karen State.," *Independent Journal of Burmese Scholarship* 1, no. 2 (2018): 33. <https://journalofburmesescholarship.org/issues/v1n2/04Gravers.pdf> (<https://journalofburmesescholarship.org>)

7.19 Week 19 (w/c March 7th)

Course Notes

- Dr David Bicknell will give the lecture this week

Lecture: Martial Law and Occupation

This lecture will explore the nature of martial law. Martial law became a subject of renewed academic interest during the War on Terror as a result of controversies over its conduct and the use of exceptional powers by the United States. The scholarly debate that followed included a revival of interest in the modern roots of martial law in the nineteenth century in two very different conflicts: the 1861-65 American Civil War and the 1865 Jamaica Rebellion. The American Civil War led to the first modern code of the laws of war issued to the Union forces in 1863 and commonly known as the Lieber Code after its main author, Dr Francis Lieber. It was in part intended to deal with issues created by what the Unionists regarded as both a rebellion and a war and the occupation of parts of the Confederacy by Union forces whereas the Jamaica Rebellion was a more limited and localized rebellion that lasted only days before being put down by British and local forces in Jamaica. Nonetheless, the severity of the methods used by them and the widespread loss of life in that short period led to a controversial and extended methodological debate on the nature and

conduct of martial law in Britain in the late 1860s. The lecture will explore how these different roots led to the development of the law of occupation in the modern laws of war and what we would now recognize as human rights law and how their development did not end the controversy as to the nature and use of martial law in conflicts such as those in the Philippines in 1899, Ireland 1916-22 and Palestine 1927-39. It will then reflect on how modern researchers and critics of the War on Terror trying to understand martial law have struggled with the different circumstances and the conflicting nature of these sources and their development and how the history of martial law can provide insight into its nature and its continuing relevance to the study of modern conflicts.

- Discussion Question:
 - What is martial law?
- Core Reading:
 - Charles Townshend, 'Martial Law: Legal and Administrative Problems of Civil Emergency in Britain and the Empire, 1800-1940', *The Historical Journal*, 25, no. 1 (1982), 167-195
 - David Dyzenhaus, 'The Puzzle of Martial Law' *University of Toronto Law Journal*, 59, no. 1 (2009), 1-64
https://www.law.utoronto.ca/utfl_file/count/documents/Dyzenhaus/Dyzenhaus-Puzzle-UTLJ.pdf
- Additional Reading:
 - David French, 'Nasty Not Nice: British counter-insurgency doctrine and practice, 1945-1967', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 23, no. 4-5 (2012), 744-761.
 - A.V. Dicey, *An Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution*, 8th edn. London: MacMillan, (1915) republished by LibertyClassics (1982) (http://files.libertyfund.org/files/1714/0125_Bk.pdf)
 - A.W.B. Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2001).

Seminar: Politics of Migration (Workshop)

Note: This class will be held in a workshop format. Materials will be provided closer to the class in preparation of the mapping exercise we will conduct.

In protracted conflicts there is a clear cost to communities. Whilst war may not be directly experienced, the limitations and challenges of living through insecurity remain. Political repression both creates and incentivises migration. As communities attempt to flee or avoid experiences of political repression they may be displaced, be forced to migrate, or proactively seek to leave vulnerable areas. Yet we can also see migration as a form of political repression, where demographics are proactively altered to achieve political aims.

This seminar will map the complex migratory patterns within Myanmar outlining the vulnerabilities and challenges this presents to the various migratory groups. By detailing the various patterns of migration and analysing the causes, consequences and implications of these patterns we will build a deeper insight into the politics of migration and displacement.

- Discussion Questions:
- What types of migration should or should not be viewed as political repression?
- Does resettlement offer a solution, escape or continuation of political repression?
- Core Reading:
- South, A. and Jolliffe K. 'Forced Migration: Typology and Local Agency in Southeast Myanmar,' *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 37, no.2 (2015), pp.211-41.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24916580>
- Additional Reading:
- Kramer, T. 'Ethnic Conflicts and Land Rights in Myanmar', *Social Research* 82, no.2 (2015), pp. 355-374. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44282108>
- Pedersen M. B. 'The Myanmar Crisis, Myanmar, and R2P 'Black Holes'' *Global Responsibility to Protect* 13, no.1 (2021), pp. 349-378.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/1875-984X-13020009>

7.20 Week 20 (w/c March 14th)

Course Notes

Lecture: War Powers and Contemporary Warfare

In the final lectures on the course, we'll be looking at how the study of dirty wars can help to improve our analysis of key issues in contemporary warfare. This lecture looks at the concept of contemporary warfare itself, and how the category of contemporary warfare might be defined. It then examines how the changing character of warfare relates to the concept of war powers - constitutional arrangements that constrain the use of military force - in light of the course as a whole. The lecture will examine contemporary war powers debates in a comparative perspective (primarily addressing Anglo-American debates) and their relation to technology, warfare, and contemporary wars.

- Discussion Question:
 - How do contemporary means and methods of warfare alter the war powers of governments?
- Core Reading:
 - McCormack, Tara. *Britain's War Powers: The Fall and Rise of Executive Authority?*. Springer, (2019). Chapter 1.
- Additional Reading:
 - Zeisberg, Mariah. *War Powers: The Politics of Constitutional Authority*, Princeton University Press (2013).
 - Joseph, Rosara. *The War Prerogative: History, Reform, and Constitutional Design*. Oxford University Press, (2013).

Seminar: War and Peace in Myanmar

For as long as Myanmar has experienced war, actors within the state and government have tried to secure peace within the state. After multiple failed attempts at both bilateral and multilateral ceasefires a deal was agreed in principle in 2015. The National Ceasefire

Agreement was signed by eight of Myanmar's main ethnic insurgents and was meant to pave the way to the end of hostilities within the state. However, there were notable exceptions from the agreement and violence across the state has escalated since 2017.

In this final seminar we will discuss the role and uses of peace agreements by state governments and critically analyse their role in ending wars. We will question the quality and utility of peace agreements in ending conflict. We will question how and why actors engage in peace negotiations and whether peace negotiations should always be perceived as a suitable resolution to conflict. Finally, we will look at whether peace agreements can and should offer protections to populations.

- Discussion Questions:
 - When does war end?
 - What security and protections can peace agreements assure?
- Core Reading:
 - Tonnesson, Zaw Oo and Aung 'Non-inclusive ceasefires do not bring peace: findings from Myanmar,' *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, latest articles, (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2021.1991141>
- Additional Reading:
 - Dulkalskis, A. 'Why do some insurgent groups agree to cease-fires while others do not? A within-case analysis of Burma/Myanmar 1948-2011,' *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 38, no.10 (2015), pp. 841-863. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1056631>
 - Plunkett, A. B. 'Democratization as a Protective Layering for Crimes Against Humanity: The Case of Myanmar,' *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 14, no.3 (2020), pp.69-89. <https://doi.org/10.5038/1911-9933.14.3.1718>

7.21 Week 21 (w/c March 21st)

Course Notes

- Today is the last seminar of the course.

Applied Lecture: Dirty War and National Security

Lecture topic TBC.

- Discussion Question:
 - TBC
- Core Reading:
 - TBC

Seminar: Course Wrap Up and Reflections

In this last seminar of the course, we'll discuss and reflect on the material we've covered over the last two terms. There is no reading required to prepare for this seminar, but

please come along having reflected on what you've learned and found interesting over the course itself.

- Discussion Questions:
 - How has your thinking about the course topics developed over the year?
 - What would you add to the module? What would you cut out?
- Core Reading:
 - None!

7.22 Week 22 (w/c March 28th)

Course Notes

- You made it, well done!
- Don't forget your research essay is due on April 14th.
- There is no seminar this week.

Lecture: Applied Lecture: War and Dirty War

Lecture topic TBC.

- Discussion Question:
 - TBC
- Core Reading:
 - TBC

Seminar: No Seminar This Week

That's all, folks!

Assessments & Project Work

8 Projects

Introduction

Project work is a core element of the course, but it is not part of your formal assessment. Individual tasks are designed to quickly deliver research skills necessary at graduate level. The group project is designed to get you used to performing research as a team. For this reason, don't be intimidated by the scale of the output required in group projects - it is calibrated to be too much for an individual, but easily manageable for a small group.

8.1 The Projects

- Book Reading
 - Deadline: By the seminar in week 2

- Research Design Prototyping Project
 - Deadline: February 4th, 2022

Aims

Why do this? There are four reasons that I have included this activity in the course (and like activities in other courses that I convene). First, people come to KCL from a wide variety of backgrounds, with differing expectations and understandings of graduate study - these activities allow me to establish a baseline and explain the expectations. Second is that group projects enables you to practice and develop teamworking skills. Third, the research design prototype allows Dr McDonald to give feedback that enables all participants to calibrate their expectations about the major assessment in the course. Lastly, this activity is intended to get you to think about the possibilities inherent in open and collaborative research efforts.

8.2 Book Reading

The book reading project is a task that is designed for you to fail. It's okay - everyone will fail and that is the point. The idea for this project is to get an understanding of the possibilities and limits of *processing* books as sources of information. We're going to be working through a method called the Sandage method of reading books, and tracking ourselves as we go. The Sandage (or X-Ray) method is an efficient way of mining academic books for information.²⁴ It is as much about inverting the way you read a book as it is about extracting information from a book itself.

The key thing to remember is that, again, there is no wrong answer. That is, the point of the exercise is to try your hand at a method of extracting information from a book, not getting the right answer.

We're going to read David Armitage's *Civil Wars*, and we're going to read it in a very particular way, and the output is tracking yourself as you read. At each stage in the process, I want you to write down 1-2 sentence answers to two questions:

- What is this book about?
- What is the author's argument?

This task will take 3 hours from start to finish (in fact, that's an order: don't go over 3 hours in this task). The early stages will be very short, the last couple will take most of your time.

Stages:

1. Read the book's title and subtitle, then note down your answers (best guess is better than "I don't know", but "I don't know" is fine if you really have no clue)

²⁴ To read the original and clarified methods, go to <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Bsne3Z-VSP0iCYkZK0-ZpRuPj6cMRKe4> which includes an example of the full note-taking method.

2. Read the table of contents, then answer the questions again
3. Read the book's index, then answer the questions (don't spend more than 15 minutes on this stage)
4. Compare what you have read in the index to the table of contents, then answer the questions
5. Skim through the footnotes/endnotes of the book, then answer the questions (this is where you can take a while)
6. Read the acknowledgements section, then answer the questions
7. Read chapter 1, then answer the questions
8. If you still have time, read as much as you can read until the three hour mark, then answer the questions

You should have 7 or 8 pairs of answers. Read through the progression of your answers, and try to identify when and how your answers changed as you read through the book. In the lecture we will discuss this progression as a group discussion activity.

8.3 Research Design Prototype

The group project feeds directly into the final research assessment. This project requires you to read and consider the readings for week 16 of the course, and then to discuss it with your group so as to produce a short prototype of a research project.

The idea for the discussion, which can be synchronous or asynchronous depending upon your group's preferences is to sketch out a skeleton of a research project. That is, imagine this as the first draft of a research project where you bounce some ideas around and come up with an idea that is interesting and coherent. This task isn't meant to require you to do any independent research, instead approach it as a way of discussing the previous lecture material and course topics and thinking through how to create a research essay.

The theme for this year's prototypes is "Dirty Wars in the Contemporary World" - You are free to draw from any of the themes of the main lecture series, so long as the problem is a contemporary one (last ten years).

Your prototype should identify:

- A research problem
- The importance of the research problem (academic/policy/both)
- A relevant theoretical disagreement
- A research puzzle
- A research question
- Research methods
- 1-2 candidate case studies

There is a word document on KEATS which you should use as your group's template which contains detailed instructions for each step. Please send in your completed word document by the 18th of January at the latest.

During the workshop I'll be giving feedback on these prototypes, and we will discuss the process of research design so as to identify common problems.

9 Assessment

Oh, the fun part.

This chapter is a guide to the expectations for assessments on this course. This guide refers to this course only, as other lecturers may require you to approach tasks similar to these in a different way. All assessments are marked according to KCL's PGT marking criteria. My intent here is to provide you with as complete a guide as possible to my reasoning for setting these assignments, factors for you to consider when completing these assessments, and something of an FAQ of common questions students have asked about these assessments in the past.

This course requires you to produce two pieces of written work for assessment. You will have to produce a literature review (2000 words, 33%), and a research essay answering a question that you define (4000 words, 67%). I have to sign off on each research essay title to make sure it's something related to the course.²⁵

Why this assessment pattern? Why not two essays? How come I'm not allowed to pick my essay title for the second essay? 4000 words, are you crazy? To answer these questions, and maybe preempt others, allow me to explain.

As I see it, the point of graduate-level study is to expose you to a range of interesting problems/questions/topics (also areas, fields, disciplines, etc), help you to figure out specific things that interest you, and enable you to leverage existing research in relevant fields to begin developing expertise in a field/area/discipline of your choice. I say "begin" because it's unlikely that any MA/MSc will make you an expert on something, but doing one is likely to speed up the process of acquiring expertise.

As such, this course is designed for you to pretty much follow your own interests (within reason) and approach the course content from the disciplinary perspective (or perspectives) that you want to develop. The course will require you to consider a range of approaches to these topics in discussions (and I expect you to be willing/able to engage with these) but I'm not going to require a historian to write an essay on international relations theory, just as I'm not going to require someone developing their own expertise in gender theory to write an essay on strategy (I advise you to consider how these disciplines can be combined, but that's besides the matter at hand).

There are some common elements to all of these assessments. One element to keep in mind is that your reader should be assumed to be an intelligent, but uninformed, person. Your level of explanation should reflect this. Don't assume that they automatically know the

²⁵ You will be expected to have a general topic in mind by January 2022, and should be able to have a precise research question by the research project workshop in week 16

existence of detailed sub-debates. Research communication is about enabling other people to comprehend your research in an efficient manner.

Following from the point above, avoid verbiage and unnecessary wordplay. Plain and clear explanation is the goal. Of course, some ideas are hard to communicate and require extended sentences to do so, but please aim for clarity.

For the erasure of any doubt, I'm committed to disciplinary pluralism. Particularly with the topics this course covers, I don't think that any single discipline can provide "the" answer to some of the questions we'll discuss. That means you are free to approach the long essay any way you want. There are a few caveats to this. First, I don't care if you're a critical theorist or a hardened neorealist, but I do expect a clear and logical argument that uses a theoretical frame drawn from existing academic work, backed by evidence/explanation. Secondly, I suggest that you connect theoretical arguments to case studies. This isn't mandatory, and may not be applicable to all disciplines, but in my experience the best essays are those that connect with actual cases. Third, and last, the cardinal sin is presenting a straw man argument. Your essay should present the strongest counter-arguments to the position that you take, and engage with them.

9.1 Literature Reviews

A literature review is intended to communicate to the reader the academic importance of a research problem. For the highest grades in a literature review, your work will either:

- Demonstrate the originality and importance of a question to which there is currently no answer in existing work on the subject, or
- Provide an original critique of academic work on an existing question

In both cases, you are not expected to have an answer to the question yourself!

It is important to distinguish between the process of writing a literature review, and the end product. The end product (e.g. what you submit for assessment) is a 2000 word piece of work that should enable an intelligent but uninformed reader to understand the importance of a research problem, its academic importance, and the key academic debates that constitute current enquiry into the subject. This means that you will have to make a number of design decisions, notably which debates and authors to include, and those to exclude, which of those included are central, and those that can be relegated to a footnote.

A literature review in the sense of the product presented for assessment is slightly artificial. Usually literature reviews are integrated into research articles. To get an understanding of how this assessment fits within general academic work, read key journals in the field that you are working. Usually, in something like *Security Studies* or similar, an author will start with an introduction to a problem or issue, and then situate that issue within existing academic work on the topic, and in the process identifying a key question to

answer.²⁶ They'll then go on to provide a reasoned method for answering the question, and answer it. What we're focused upon in this assessment is the first two steps.

You should title your literature review as a question. For example:

- What are the key objections to Michael Walzer's "Moral Equality of Combatants"?
- What is the importance of the description of "Targeted killings"?
- Is the automatic filtering of terrorism-related content by digital platforms a form of political repression?

If you are stuck for something to write about, a good formula for generating potential topics is to do some preliminary research. Ask yourself "How have X analysed Y?" where X = self-selected members of an academic discipline,²⁷ and Y = a case study (conflict)²⁸ or an element of a case study (important event/debate),²⁹ or disciplinary tool (ticking time bomb scenario, key theoretical discussion relevant to the course).

After you have found something that looks interesting, ask yourself "Why is that important?" in the sense that you should be primarily focused upon academic importance in this assessment. Policy relevance is optional.³⁰ Lastly, you should be keeping in mind "Is there something important that they have missed?" because this last question is where you will find the critical engagement/originality elements that I mentioned at the outset.

You are free to stick within a single discipline, but sometimes it is interesting to compare the approaches of two disciplines to the same topic. In the end, pick a topic that interests you, and that has some demonstrable academic importance. You don't get extra marks for picking a cutting-edge or vitally important question, but without demonstrable academic importance, it is hard to score high marks in this assessment.

9.2 Research Essay

If the prospect of a 4000 word research essay worries you, please don't panic - there are effectively 10 teaching sessions to support you towards this in term 2. The basic structure of a research essay is similar to that of a research article that you will find in an academic journal, but it is likely to be shorter (most academic articles are 7000-9000 words). In

²⁶ Here are some good examples of this:@@

²⁷ Historians, strategists, political theorists, etc.

²⁸ For your own benefit, try to avoid those used as case studies on the course, it's better to use this to expand your knowledge into a new area.

²⁹ In the context of this course, there are no shortage of key events. Often a single, infamous, war crime forms a cornerstone for ongoing discussions about key theoretical questions.

³⁰ Outside universities this is likely to be the other way around, but you paid to take an academic course.

short, you will need an introduction, to explain your research question, explain how and why you're going to answer it in a given way, and then provide an answer.

There are four general components for a successful research essay: Identifying a research area, identifying an interesting research puzzle, constructing a theoretical framework, and posing an answerable research question. We will be covering this in detail in the lecture series in term 2. Identifying a research area is much the same as what you do in a literature review.


Identifying research puzzles is important, because they are a good way to sharpen your thinking, and to avoid research questions with obvious answers (which means it is hard to develop original engagement with the topic). As proposed by Karl Gustafsson and Linus Hagström, research puzzles can be framed in this way:

'Why x despite y?', or 'How did x become possible despite y?'³¹ A puzzle thus formulated is admittedly a research question, but one requiring much closer familiarity with the state of the art than a 'why x-question'. The researcher considers the phenomenon x puzzling since it happens despite y – that is, previous knowledge that would seem contradicted by its occurrence.³¹

However a good research puzzle might not be answerable. This is a big problem for a 4000 word essay - you don't necessarily have the space to engage at depth with some kinds of questions. One important problem is too much novelty. Here I will borrow from Michael Horowitz, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania.³² Horowitz had a great piece of advice for choosing PhD dissertation topics that I think is also applicable to graduate-level research in general. In essence: either pick a new body of theory to analyse a pre-existing case study or substantive issue, or use pre-existing theory to analyse a new case study or substantive issue. Old theory/old case is unlikely to get you anywhere interesting, and (particularly with 4000 words) attempting to explain a new body of theory and apply it to a new case study for which there isn't much agreed evidence is the equivalent of a moonshot. Horowitz frames this as "High risk/high reward", here I frame it as a unicorn, because at 4000 words successful examples are pretty much figments of the imagination.

³¹ Gustafsson and Hagström (2018)

³² His twitter handle is mchorowitz

	Theory/Argument		
Case Studies		Old Theory	New Theory
	Old Case Study	Boring, and pointless	✓
	New Case Study	✓	

What about examples? Well, for the top left (old/old), this might be trying to evaluate whether classical or neoclassical realism best explains the origins of World War 1. For the top right (old case/new theory) this might be using emerging theories of ontological security to explain the origins of World War 1. For the bottom left, this might be applying classical/neoclassical realism to the origins of the conflict in Yemen. For unicorn status, you could attempt to apply ontological security to Yemen. I'm not saying it can't be done, but it would be very, very difficult to do in 4000 words.

Where a 4000 word essay extends on a literature review is that you are then expected to answer the question. This means that you will need to construct a theoretical framework. As above, you can pick old or new theory, but a good theoretical framework for answering a research question usually involves two competing theories or explanations, which can be used to evaluate evidence or explain events. Here it's good to research to the point where you can identify key competing explanations/authors, prior to selecting a couple to use in your essay. An important consideration here is the existence of prior work. If there is no prior work in the area, then you are going to have a really tough time. If a theory or argument is so left-field that it doesn't really connect to existing academic research, how are you going to be able to make those necessary connections *and* answer the question in

4000 words? Similarly, if the case study that you want to examine has very little written about it by reputable authors, how are you going to establish the facts of the case within the word limit? My advice is that you pick a research puzzle where there are plenty of related pre-existing disagreements, or one that sits at the intersection of two fields/disciplines.

The last step is to consider what kind of question can be answered in 4000 words. This is primarily an issue of scoping questions. Set questions are often quite broad or vague, because part of the art of answering a set question essay is to be able to re-scope the question to something answerable in the introduction. Bear in mind when reading around for suitable questions that you are not assessed upon your ability to produce work comparable to people with a minimum of 3-5 years of professional training, but you are assessed on your ability to select a question that can be answered within 4000 words without substantial original research. To navigate this, let us turn to Greek mythology.³³

Per Wikipedia:

Scylla and Charybdis were mythical sea monsters noted by Homer; Greek mythology sited them on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina between Sicily and the Italian mainland. Scylla was rationalized as a rock shoal (described as a six-headed sea monster) on the Italian side of the strait and Charybdis was a whirlpool off the coast of Sicily. They were regarded as maritime hazards located close enough to each other that they posed an inescapable threat to passing sailors; avoiding Charybdis meant passing too close to Scylla and vice versa. According to Homer, Odysseus was forced to choose which monster to confront while passing through the strait; he opted to pass by Scylla and lose only a few sailors, rather than risk the loss of his entire ship in the whirlpool.

You face two dilemmas in scoping your research question. First, whether the answer to the question is either too obvious, or frankly impossible. Second, whether the argument required to answer the question is simple, or obscenely complex. By “complex” I mean that it involves far too many factors to be able to pull them all together in a coherent manner. Per Homer, I suggest that you err on the side of difficulty and complexity, but not too much.

To give some explanation, let’s say I want to write a 4000 word question about British responses to decolonisation movements. I pose the following question:

Did ideology shape British responses to decolonisation movements?

The problem with the question is that it’s quite clear the answer is yes. Read any history book about British responses to decolonisation movements, and ideas figure heavily. Moreover, the question as framed is so general that the answer is likely to be straightforward. A question at this level of abstraction is going to produce an answer full of generalities. Okay, attempt 2:

How did ideology shape British responses to decolonisation movements?

³³ Bet you weren’t expecting that line.

Okay, now we've gone in completely the other direction. The scope of this question is such that we're now trying to explain how ideas influenced British responses. How many different responses were there? I don't know. How many different mechanisms of influence? I don't know. You could answer this question in a broad-brush fashion, but it's likely to be impossible to answer as posed, moreover the sheer range of factors that you'd have to account for would make it unmanageable in 4000 words. Time for round 3:

How did doctrine shape British military responses to decolonisation movements?

Better, but still not perfect. In contrast to the previous question, we've now rescoped from all the institutions of the British empire to the military³⁴ and a single mechanism (How did doctrine - and the ideas embedded therein - shape military responses). However this is still too complex. The British Empire was big, there were plenty of people pressing for independence, and frankly you can't treat different decolonisation movements as interchangeable. The question as it stands would force you to consider an extremely wide range of cases to try to provide some answer. Onto round 4:

How did doctrine shape the British use of torture during the Mau Mau uprising?

This is far, far, more answerable than the previous questions. Note that it has cut "military responses" down to a single issue, and the case study down to a single conflict during the decolonisation period. To actually get an answer to this question, you'd have to go and read a lot of books and articles, but there is a substantial amount of research on Kenya and the Mau Mau uprising. This kind of question is the 'sweet spot' for a 4000 word essay, but please don't feel that you have to write on this topic, or even from a historical perspective - this is just here for an example.

Okay, so once you have a question, then you have to answer it. See the previous chapter for advice on this. But again, we'll be talking about constructing research projects in detail during term 2.

Further Material

10 Skills Development

This is written on the assumption that you want to improve your abilities.

10.1 A Roadmap for Skills Development

The first term is designed to take someone who has not written a mid-length (2000 words) academic essay before, and enable them to write one to postgraduate level. Along the way you will produce a variety of research products, each of which are opportunities to develop

³⁴ Okay, still a sprawling set of institutions, but you get the drift

core transferrable research skills. The second term enables students to build upon these core skills to produce a 4000 word research essay, to postgraduate level.

If your starting point is never having written an academic essay before, then this will be hard, but it is an achievable goal. You will lack the experience that many of your peers have with academic writing, and are likely to need to put in extra effort early on to catch up with this skill. On the other hand, if you've been accepted onto a KCL MA programme without an undergraduate degree, then it is almost certain that you have significant relevant professional experience. This is something that many of your fellow students will likely lack. Academic writing is a very specific form of communication, with its own standards and expectations that may seem confusing at first,³⁵ but it is a skill that can be developed like any other skill. In other words, don't be intimidated!

Likewise, if you are returning to university after a significant period of time away, then it is likely that you will need to refresh your skills at writing academic essays. One particular issue here can be overconfidence - you may have excelled at university, and excelled subsequently at a job requiring intensive research, but this does not prevent your academic writing skills from declining over that period of time. Take some time early on to approach the academic research and writing process from afresh.

If you have gone directly from undergraduate to postgraduate, or only taken a year or two gap between the two degrees, then the academic writing element of this module is likely to come easier to you. At the same time, this is a module designed for graduates. A first at undergraduate level does not automatically translate to a distinction at MA level.³⁶ You will need to work to improve your academic writing skills to a postgraduate level. Equally important, you should consider the group project work as an opportunity to develop teamworking skills that will be required to translate your research skills into the professional world.

10.2 Track Your Progress

The most important step in developing skills is to identify, and reflect upon, your baseline knowledge and skills as you begin the course. This section of the handbook is primarily concerned with skills development, but we'll combine both knowledge and skills in this exercise. Take 30 minutes out of your day and work through the following questions, writing 1-2 sentences down on a piece of paper for each:

- Tasks Checklist, have you ever:

³⁵ A good example of this is the attention paid to plagiarism in academia. In the business world, plagiarism is a normal and everyday activity. In academia, plagiarism is a serious misconduct issue.

³⁶ From experience, the people who excel at MA level are those who put the effort in, independent of whether or not they have a prior degree or what classification that degree was

- Read an academic article
- Read a research monograph³⁷
- Performed a literature search³⁸
- Written an article review, or book review
- Written a literature review
- Written a short academic essay³⁹
- Written a mid-length academic essay⁴⁰
- Written a dissertation⁴¹
- Researched and delivered a non-academic research product
- Produced a basic piece of collaborative research⁴²
- Produced a substantial piece of collaborative research⁴³
- Designed a substantial piece of collaborative research⁴⁴
- What research skills are you seeking to improve as a priority?
- How would you rate your knowledge and understanding of the following concepts:⁴⁵
 - War
 - Security
 - Strategy
 - Surveillance
 - Justice
 - Ethics
 - Repression
 - Insurgency
 - Terrorism
 - State terrorism

³⁷ AKA an academic book, but we like our fancy names. Monographs are usually written very differently to books for public consumption

³⁸ A focused trawl through available academic literature and data to identify relevant material

³⁹ Upto 3000 words

⁴⁰ 5000-7000 words

⁴¹ 10,000 - 15,000 words of academic writing

⁴² Something equivalent to a 10 minute powerpoint presentation on a set topic/question

⁴³ As above, yet more work involved

⁴⁴ As above, except you were involved in selecting the research question/topic

⁴⁵ 1-2 lines for each

- What elements of the module interest you the most?

10.3 The Basic Structure of Academic Work

This is a guide to the basic structure of academic work, and the generic set of skills that transfer across pretty much everything you will do. It is designed to get you to think about your work process, research, analysis, and communication

10.4 Iteration

The basic academic workflow is repetition. We do something, think “Hmmm” and then do it again.⁴⁶ You may see a model like: Question -> Literature Search -> Analysis -> Write Up -> Submit. This is basically a lie, because it eliminates the repeated work at each and every interval. A more accurate workflow for a response to a set question is something like:

1. Read the question
2. Read a couple of things to get a basic understanding of what the question means
3. Scan databases to work out who has written on that question
4. Read a couple of major works
5. Read the question again and figure out what you need to answer the question
6. Do something like a literature search
7. Read through the key articles/books/chapters in the search
8. Begin analysing your research, and realise you need to cast the net a bit wider, or fill some gaps
9. Go back and search for more articles/books/chapters
10. Analyse your material and figure out an answer to the question
11. Plan out your answer
12. Begin writing up your answer, and start to spot holes
13. Quick search to find more material, and integrate that
14. Finish writing up your answer, realise that you now have a different take on the question
15. Re-draft your answer, maybe even go and read more material
16. Submit

The point of this is to say that academic work is a creative process. Your ideas are likely to change throughout the process of creating an academic input. The second point is that you should begin this process early, as you may find yourself looping back to almost the start of the process quite a few times.

Many people skip step 15. My advice to you is to never submit something that has not been re-drafted at least once, but preferably two or more times. Looping steps 13-15 a couple of times will do your work the world of good. Furthermore, it's in some senses the least

⁴⁶ Hopefully we think more than “Hmmm” but you get the drift

stressful time to actually work on your argument, because if the deadline hits, then you at least have something good to go.

10.5 Building and Reducing an Argument

In the real world of academia,⁴⁷ arguments are usually presented in abstracts of about 200 words. In the real world of business, arguments sometimes have to be compressed to an elevator pitch of 1-2 sentences. A key point is that if you can explain your answer in 1-2 sentences, then it is easy to build out that answer in a logical fashion to a book-length manuscript. A well written and structured book can be distilled into an extended review,⁴⁸ short review,⁴⁹ abstract,⁵⁰ or sales pitch.⁵¹ For this reason, my suggested workflow for developing your argument/answer,⁵² is that you explain your answer in a paragraph⁵³, which you then reduce to a 1-2 sentence answer, and then build back out into an essay.

So:

1. Your basic answer (250 words)
2. Your distilled answer (1-2 sentences)
3. An argument that substantiates your distilled answer (250 words)
4. Your argument written out in 7-12 sentences
5. Your argument written out in 7-12 sentences, with paragraphs to support each point

The 7-12 sentences is largely arbitrary, but is the appropriate scope for a 2500-3000 word essay. The point here is that this same framework can build out to longer research. For example, a 4000 word research essay will require your answer to be answered in a small number of sections,⁵⁴ each of which contain their own argument, which can be written out

⁴⁷ We do live in the real world, but those of us who study metaphysics sometimes reject the basic assumptions of this statement

⁴⁸ The kind you get in the *New York Review of Books*

⁴⁹ The kind you will get in the book reviews section of journals

⁵⁰ Often the publisher's description of the book

⁵¹ Alternately, the review you get from colleagues - "Have you read Professor Doe's latest book? It's about..."

⁵² You'll want an argument that answers the question. An answer without an argument usually lacks coherence, an argument that doesn't answer the question is missing the point. A piece of writing that contains neither is the shortcut to a failing grade.

⁵³ 250 words

⁵⁴ 2-3 maximum

in 7-12 sentences, supported by paragraph. A book can be built out by supporting the points with 5000-7000 word chapters, which each have their own argument that can be written out in a number of sentences, each supported by a section... etc.⁵⁵

Okay, but how do you practice this? There are two key skills at work - the reduction of an argument, and building out an argument. These are related, but you can do two distinct tasks to practice each process independently of one another.

Reducing an argument: Find a journal article, read it,⁵⁶ read the abstract, then try to reduce the abstract to 1-2 sentences. Re-read the article and see if this reduced argument matches with the text. If it does, try doing this on another article. If it doesn't, try re-phrasing your distilled argument. As an extension activity, you can try reading articles, and writing your own 200 word abstracts for the articles, based upon the main text of the article.⁵⁷

Building out an argument: Take the seminar questions for this course, and the ones that we discuss in the lecture sections as your basis. Try to write distilled arguments that express different answers to the same question. For each of these, build out to a 200 word answer, and then a 7-12 sentence answer.⁵⁸

10.6 Supporting Your Argument

This section reflects my expectations about the use of footnotes and references for your work in this course. This can be quite a confusing area for some people. Depending upon your background, using footnotes to support an argument may appear to be obvious, or quite strange. Regardless of your opinion or intuition, you will need to support your argument in order to pass this course.

The best way to understand footnotes is to recognise the multiple roles that they can play in a single piece of work. A footnote is a formal structure that enables your reader to understand the origins of your argument in a space-efficient manner. Despite its formal structure, a footnote can point to a variety of resources. For example, a footnote might point to the source for a figure or quote. Equally, a footnote might direct the reader to a book about a particular type of research method, or it might highlight a particular author's

⁵⁵ I'm not saying this approach makes for well-written books, only that it makes for coherent ones. The jump from coherence to good writing is, however, one way. There are a great many beautifully written non-fiction books in the world that lack a coherent argument and are, for academic purposes, the equivalent of popcorn (Fun to eat, but devoid of nutritional value).

⁵⁶ You don't have to take notes, and feel free to skim

⁵⁷ This is a much more time intensive activity, so try the fast version first. It's better to get in a high number of repetitions, until you cease to improve between repetitions

⁵⁸ This exercise is really good for understanding how a different answer/line of argument can lead to radically different structures for essays

work that your own work is engaging with. The point of a footnote is that it saves you the need to explain fundamental elements of a disciplinary approach to a question from first principles, or the need to describe a source's reliability in full if it is tangential to your argument.

But what do I need to footnote? In my opinion, you should reference everything that is necessary to build the fundamental skeleton of your essay and argument, even if a selection of this appears to be so obvious that it seems unnecessary. A useful metaphor is to think about how you'd go about climbing a cliff. You could free-climb the whole way, without any safety gear, and trust in your ability to get to the top without an accident. Alternately, you can do what most climbers do, which is use a safety rope and clip in along the way, so that if you fall, you don't fall that far (although it might still hurt). In this sense, footnotes are the safety clips - in the event that you do make a mistake in your work, at least the person reading it can understand the origin of the mistake that you made.

A second way to think about footnotes is that they allow you to pass the buck to someone else. A research essay should require you to focus on a particular set of topics, which requires you to understand what is necessary scaffolding (research methods, where this question sits within a discipline or two), what is very important, and what is necessary to mention but otherwise ancillary to your answer. You don't want to spend 50% of your time re-stating first principles about quantitative or qualitative research methods, so you declare your research method and explain your choice, and then point the reader towards wider works that they can look to for a fuller explanation of your selected research method. Equally, if something requires mentioning, but is ancillary to your argument, then you want to enable the reader to understand the concept, or idea, in a short space of time, and then point them elsewhere if they want to learn more. Both of these then permit you to maximise the time that you spend answering the important elements of the question.

On a deeper level, being rigorous with footnoting is also a way of forcing yourself to pare down your argument to its essentials, and to avoid expansive, ambiguous, or hyperbolic statements. If you absolutely cannot avoid making an over-the-top statement (eg "9/11 was the darkest day in American history" or "The 2003 invasion of Iraq was the biggest strategic error of the 21st century so far"), a footnote pointing to someone else who makes it is a pretty good way to let them take the bullet for you, should your reader disagree with what you are writing.

If you come to academia from a professional background, you may be forgiven for wondering why this is all so important. Obviously, there are different standards of plagiarism tolerance in academia to the professional world. But in the professional world it is not always necessary to show your working to the degree that academics do as a matter of routine. The best explanation I can offer for this (in the space allotted here) is that underlying all academic disciplines is the question of how knowledge is formed, and why. In some disciplines, these questions are relatively settled, but in others (IR is a good example of this) there is considerable contestation about what constitutes knowledge, how it can be attained, and why that matters. Your referencing offers a glimpse of your own world view, whether you like it or not, and people can, and will, judge you by it. So it's not only a question of what the answer to a question is, but how you arrived at it, and why you

chose the path that you took. References give the reader a gist of all of these, and that is why they are so necessary.

10.7 Academic Writing

Both of the assessments for this course are types of essay. Essay writing is a creative activity. It is an art, not a science. That said, art involves craft and conventions. Wherever you see creative activity, there is likely craft at work, and essay writing is no different. This applies to academic work across disciplines, but different disciplines and fields have different conventions. Understanding these conventions is important, and can be done by sight in many cases. The Department of War Studies generally draws its conventions from history, international relations, and the social sciences. Each course will have its own specific requirements (notably for reference styles) so pay attention to what your lecturers ask for. That said, there are three elements that transcend this: the technical elements of an essay, structuring your essay, and writing your essay.

Essays have technical elements. These are, in general, non-negotiable. The absence of technical elements is a signal to a reader that something is wrong. If your essay does not have a title page, the essay title at the top, consistent citations, and a bibliography, then the reader is likely to get the impression that you are unable to produce these basic elements of academic writing. These are not finishing touches, they are foundations. An essay without a title is akin to a front page news story without a headline. Inconsistent citations indicates that you are either unaware of the importance of citations, or unable —on a technical level— to use them. Essays lacking bibliographies indicate that you are either unable to produce one, or that your work on the essay is sloppy enough to forget to include one. Either looks bad.⁵⁹

With that in mind: Please read your essay for technical mistakes before submitting it.

I advise reading your essay backwards, and from the bottom up (if using footnotes). Keep a copy of your bibliography separate and cross out an item each time you encounter a reference to it (and if it's not there when you find a reference, make sure to add to the bibliography). Check for consistency at all points, particularly with citation formatting, spelling and grammar. I am not allergic to American English, but make sure not to mix British and American English in a single piece of work. Remember that quoted material should be quoted as-is, so don't Americanise British authors, or vice-versa.

On a structural level of an essay, boring is good. Every essay that you write will contain an introduction, your argument, and a conclusion. For 2500 word essays, I advise 5-7 paragraphs. For essays of 4000 words in length, I advise that you make your argument over at 12+ paragraphs. Try to keep paragraph length consistent. Each paragraph should consist

⁵⁹ Technical sloppiness is best compared to an unforced error. Time pressures aside, there is no real explanation for it in an academic setting, and, from experience, it is the shortest path towards a case of unwitting plagiarism, which is not where you want to find yourself at any point.

of a point required to make your argument, and a critical engagement with the evidence, theory, etc that supports that point.

Your introduction should be a maximum of 500 words or so. That's the maximum. The best way to think about this limit is that every word in your introduction is one that can't be used to make your argument. That said, there's a good reason introductions exist. Your introduction should inform the reader of your line of argument (more on that later), how you are going to explain your argument, and where you are drawing your terms and definitions from.

A second way to think about your introduction is that it serves as one big car park for every contentious issue that relates to your answer, but is unnecessary to discuss in depth for the purposes of answering the question. You don't have the space to explain and explore every single theoretical argument that is relevant or important to your answer, but the introduction is where you park every theoretical argument that doesn't need further exploration. You will be able to read advanced forms of this kind of activity in peer-reviewed articles, and the first chapter of most academic books published by university presses. Even though you might not be in a position to comprehend the range of issues that an academic parks by the end of their introduction, or first chapter, the process is similar to what is required of you in an academic essay, even at undergraduate level.

At this point you may be (rightly) wondering how you are meant to do in 500 words what your tutors do in at least a thousand words, if not many multiples for that figure. If you read academic articles, the introduction serves multiple purposes. A good one will usually identify a gap in existing literature of a given subject, an important research puzzle associated with that gap, and propose a way of investigating that puzzle. That's a lot of heavy lifting that you don't necessarily need to do. Your title is, in essence, a research problem served to you on a plate. You'll have to identify why it's important, and the parameters for answering the question, but longer introductions are unnecessary. For a 4000 word essay, you should follow your introduction with your discussion of your theoretical frame, etc.

You will present your argument in paragraphs. I use the imperative here, because if you don't present your argument in paragraphs, then you are going to have a very bad time. The first sentence of your paragraph should identify the argument that the paragraph will make, with reference to your overall line of argument, and the last sentence should connect the paragraph to the one that follows it. Everything in between those two sentences should be evidence about the point that the paragraph is making.

The line of argument in an essay is yours. It's your answer. I can't tell you what you'll be writing about, but I can tell you that it's usually expected to be logical and coherent, even if engaging with the worst excesses of post-modernist philosophy. Your line of argument is your answer to the question, and therefore the opening line of many of your paragraphs are likely to address the essay title itself. A good way of testing your line of argument is to read your introduction, and then the first and last sentence in each paragraph, and then the conclusion. If the result doesn't sound vague or gibberish (twin demons of academic work),

and the conclusion is convincing based upon what precedes it, then the chances are that you have a decent line of argument.

While the introduction of an essay differs a fair bit from academic articles, the point about a line of argument doesn't differ as much. Try reading 3–4 articles in this way, and you'll get a feeling for what I'm talking about. It's particularly important to read case studies this way, before you include them in essays. You will need to be using evidence in an essay, not describing it. There is a world of difference between the two, and the easiest way to understand that difference is to read an article using case studies in International Security or Security Studies, and compare that to a descriptive account of events that you might find in a general history of the topic.

Your reader (me) will also need to know the limits of your argument. Set your argument up, then knock it down—what remains is likely to be its most defensible form. Above all, don't think that ignoring major objections to your argument is in any way persuasive. The best way to avoid major issues is by framing your argument in the introduction (see above), however contentious points need to be addressed. How you address them, and the evidence that you use to do so, is what will get you higher grades. Remember: you're being marked on your ability to provide a reasoned argument with evidence that displays your underlying knowledge of the subject matter, it's not an election or similar rhetoric-heavy exercise.

Your conclusion ties everything together. Think Star Wars not The Sixth Sense. You should remind your reader of your answer to the question, why your answer to the question makes sense and is supported by the available evidence, and maybe you can add a few lines of "Where next?"—e.g. why your answer is important or where it could be continued. Don't throw curveballs, twists, a ton of new evidence, or a lot of material that contradicts what you have just spent 2,800 words arguing (keep your conclusion short, 250 words tops). Think of the nice warm fuzzy feeling you get while watching John McClane hug Holly McClane at the end of Die Hard 2, rather than the bleak "What happens next?" of The Thing and The Italian Job. Leave your reader thinking "What a good essay" and not "What the hell?" Also, never, ever, watch re-makes and re-boots. They suck. If you ask me, Netflix should be forced to buy more classic films, but not musicals (except The Blues Brothers). If you're thinking "Where the hell did all this advice about movies come from?", well, that's what the person marking your essay will be thinking if you start going off on a tangent at word 4830 of a 5000 word essay.

One last point:

- Don't write essays in bullet points.
- Ever.
- Because they don't connect.
- And they make for a bad argument.

10.8 Acting Upon Feedback

The standard college feedback loop is 28 days. That is, you will receive feedback for your work within 28 days of submitting it. This is a long time, but it's necessary for me to mark your work properly and return it to you. Furthermore, although I aim to return feedback sooner, this is not always possible. The problem this poses is that by the time you get feedback, you are likely concerned with the next deadline, or maybe immersed drafting already. You might even have forgotten parts of what you wrote because mentally you have already moved on from the task. Nonetheless, you will markedly improve if you set aside a chunk of time from your schedule⁶⁰ and work on your feedback.

The feedback that you get from me is likely to reflect the standard of your work. As a rule of thumb:

- If your work is below 50%, your feedback is going to state what is needed for a passing mark, and explicit standards required to achieve 60% for this kind of assessment
- If your work is between 50% and 70%, your feedback is going to explain what would be needed for the next grade boundary, and for marks of 70% and above.
- If your work is between 70-75%, I'm likely to be providing you with comments about elements that are holding your work back, and commentary on drawing out thoughtful/original points in your essay.
- If your work is above 75%, I'm likely to give you comments on how to explore or reconfigure your answer to develop the areas of particular excellence.

Please note that in the British system, 70% is the equivalent of an A grade.⁶¹

A second element of the feedback that I give you is a defined set of areas to work on, for the above reasons. I strongly suggest that you take the time to examine these areas, and undertake tasks as noted. The reason for this is that acting upon feedback in this way is an additional mechanism of learning from that same task. The tasks that I suggest in feedback are all designed to be performed in half an hour or so, as a time-efficient way of building upon your existing work to improve your overall skillset.

10.9 Tracking Your Skills Development

Finally, one of the most important things that you can do is to track your progress over time. A very good sports coach once said to me: "Everybody makes mistakes, professionals can recover." Postgraduate study is hard. There will be ups and downs. You are highly

⁶⁰ 1-2 hours per assessment

⁶¹ From experience, this can cause heart attacks for students who completed their undergraduate studies in America. This is prime example of transatlantic mistranslation, because a British lecturer will say "Congratulations, that was excellent work" by giving a student the worst percentage grade that they've had since high school.

likely to fall short of your own standards at some point. The important thing is that every high and low presents an opportunity to learn and improve.

11 Case Studies

Here are five case studies for your purposes. Each of the case studies relates to a key class of conflict associated with the concept of dirty wars. The five selected case studies are picked because all elements of the core lecture series apply to them. This is simply to get you started, in case you wish to quickly familiarise yourself with the range of conflicts that could be termed dirty wars.

The readings for the five case studies are divided into four sections. The first section for each case study contains a small selection of readings designed to give you a quick overview of the conflict itself – the origins of the conflict and a broad outline of what happened. The second section contains readings that tie individual course themes to the case study. The third section provides wider contextual readings that are specific to each conflict, primarily focused on its long term effects and consequences. This material isn't necessarily covered by the course, but allows you to consider the wider consequences of the kinds of wars we will be studying in this module. The fourth section contains a selection of responses to the conflict, from non-fiction reportage, and documentaries through to films and works of fiction. This is provided to round out your understanding of these wars.

11.1 Argentina

This is a case study that lets you consider the framing of what we're talking about - war, national security, or one-sided violence, state terrorism, and political repression? Argentina is one example of a cluster of related conflicts in south America during the cold war in which conservative governments, or military dictatorships, aimed to eliminate Communist or socialist challengers to the status quo. In many cases, Argentina included, the results were brutal.

- Introductory Readings
 - Robben, Antonius CGM. "From Dirty War to Genocide: Argentina's Resistance to National Reconciliation." *Memory Studies* 5, no. 3 (2012): 305–15.
 - Lewis, Paul H. *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina*. Greenwood Publishing Group, (2002).
- Thematic Readings
 - **Conflict Status:** Osiel, Mark J. "Constructing Subversion in Argentina's Dirty War." *Representations* 75, no. 1 (2001): 119–58.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rep.2001.75.1.119>.
 - **Human Dignity and Political Community:** Disappeared, Argentine National Commission on. "Nunca Mas: The Report of the Argentine National Commission on the Disappeared." Faber & Faber, (1986). [Available online here](#)

- **Law and Conflict:** Snyder, Frederick E. "State of Siege and Rule of Law in Argentina: The Politics and Rhetoric of Vindication." *Lawyer of the Americas* 15 (1984): 503.
- **Reasons for Restraint:** Lew, Ilan. "'Barbarity' and 'Civilization' According to Perpetrators of State Violence During the Last Dictatorship in Argentina." *Política Y Sociedad* 50, no. 2 (2013): 501–15. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_POSO.2013.v50.n2.40018.
- **Sexual Violence in Conflict:** Hollander, Nancy Caro. "The Gendering of Human Rights: Women and the Latin American Terrorist State." *Feminist Studies* 22, no. 1 (1996): 41–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3178246>.
- **National Security and Political Cleavages:** Pion-Berlin, David. "The National Security Doctrine, Military Threat Perception, and the 'Dirty War' in Argentina." *Comparative Political Studies* 21, no. 3 (1988): 382–407. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414088021003004>.
- **Population Control:** Berman, Roger S., Maureen R. Clark. "State Terrorism: Disappearances." *Rutgers Law Journal* 13 (1981-1982): 531.
- **Political Repression:** Pion-Berlin, David, and George A. Lopez. "Of Victims and Executioners: Argentine State Terror, 1975–1979." *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1991): 63–86. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600389>.
- **Intelligence & Institutions:** Kalmanowiecki, Laura. "Origins and Applications of Political Policing in Argentina." *Latin American Perspectives* 27, no. 2 (2000): 36–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X0002700203>.
- **Torture:** Carlson, Eric Stener. "The Influence of French 'Revolutionary War' Ideology on the Use of Torture in Argentina's 'Dirty War'." *Human Rights Review* 1, no. 4 (2000): 71–84. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12142-000-1044-5>.
- **One-Sided Violence:** Brysk, Alison. "The Politics of Measurement: The Contested Count of the Disappeared in Argentina." *Human Rights Quarterly* 16 (1994): 676.
- Further Reading
 - Pion-Berlin, David. *The Ideology of State Terror: Economic Doctrine and Political Repression in Argentina and Peru*. L. Rienner Publishers, (1989).
 - Armony, Ariel C. "Producing and Exporting State Terror: The Case of Argentina." In *When States Kill: Latin America, the U.S., and Technologies of Terror*, edited by Cecilia Menjívar and Néstor Rodríguez, 305–31. University of Texas Press, (2005).
- Other material
 - *El secreto de sus ojos*[The Secret in Their Eyes], 2009. Directed by Juan José Campanella.

11.2 Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland

This is a case study that allows you to see the 'grand sweep' - how security institutions develop and change over time. Also, the Troubles feature most of the 'dirty war' elements that we're talking about. This case study is as much about the development of the modern

British state as it is about the changing patterns of resistance to British rule in Ireland and, latterly, Northern Ireland. A second role that this case study plays is that it provides a case study in accountability processes (and their failures). As such, gaining familiarity with the reports and inquiries that threaded through the conflict enables you to better analyse and reflect upon the line between the rule of law, and rule by law.

- Introductory Readings
 - Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline, and Colin McInnes. “The British Army in Northern Ireland 1969–1972: From Policing to Counter-terror.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 20, no. 2 (1997): 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402399708437676>.
 - Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline. *The Origins of the Present Troubles in Northern Ireland*. Routledge, (2014).
- Thematic Readings
 - **Conflict Status:** Dixon, Paul. *Northern Ireland: The Politics of War and Peace*. Palgrave Macmillan, (2008). Chapter 1
 - **Human Dignity and Political Community:** Jackson, John. “Many Years on in Northern Ireland: The Diplock Legacy Rights and Justice: Essays in Honour of Professor Tom Hadden.” *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 60 (2009): 213.
 - **Law and Conflict:** Campbell, Colm, and Ita Connelly. “A Model for the ‘War Against Terrorism’? Military Intervention in Northern Ireland and the 1970 Falls Curfew.” *Journal of Law and Society* 30, no. 3 (2003): 341–75.
 - **Reasons for Restraint:** Hewitt, Christopher. “Catholic Grievances, Catholic Nationalism and Violence in Northern Ireland During the Civil Rights Period: A Reconsideration.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 32, no. 3 (1981): 362–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/589283>.
 - **Sexual Violence in Conflict:** McWilliams, Monica. “Violence Against Women and Political Conflict: The Northern Ireland Experience.” *Critical Criminology* 8, no. 1 (1997): 78–92.
 - **National Security and Political Cleavages:** McCleery, Martin J. *Operation Demetrius and Its Aftermath: A New History of the Use of Internment Without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971-75*. Manchester University Press, (2015).
 - **Population Control:** Byrne, Jonny, and Cathy Gormley-Heenan. “Beyond the Walls: Dismantling Belfast’s Conflict Architecture.” *City* 18, nos. 4-5 (2014): 447–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2014.939465>.
 - **Political Repression:** Rolston, Bill. “‘An Effective Mask for Terror’: Democracy, Death Squads and Northern Ireland.” *Crime, Law and Social Change* 44, no. 2 (2005): 181–203.
 - **Intelligence & Institutions:** Jackson, Brian A. “Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a ‘Long War’.” *Military Review*, nos. January-February (2007): 74–85.; Moran, Jon. “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland.” *Intelligence and National Security* 25, no. 1 (2010): 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684521003588070>.

- **Torture:** Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline, and Andrew Mumford. “Torture, Rights, Rules and Wars: Ireland to Iraq.” *International Relations* 21, no. 1 (2007): 119–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117807073772>.
- **One-Sided Violence:** Newsinger, John. “From Counter-Insurgency to Internal Security: Northern Ireland 1969-1992.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 6, no. 1 (1995): 88–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319508423100>.
- Further Reading
 - Dixon, Paul. *Northern Ireland: The Politics of War and Peace*. Palgrave Macmillan, (2008).
 - Dillon, Martin. *The Dirty War*. Routledge, (1999).
- Other material
 - *In the Name of the Father*, 1993. Directed by Jim Sheridan.
 - *Hunger*, 2008. Directed by Steve McQueen.

11.3 The Vietnam Wars

The wars in Indochina that resulted in defeats for both France and America enable us to examine the concepts of the course in the context of open warfare. Taken together, the French and American involvement in Vietnam, and wars that ran in parallel to this main conflict, demonstrate the relevance of dirty wars to the analysis of war. A particular element of this case study is the analysis of military thought and strategy as it develops in response to the problem of insurgency in this case study, and the wider intersection of politics and warfare.

- Introductory Readings
 - Porch, Douglas. “French Imperial Warfare 1945-62.” In *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, edited by Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian. Osprey, (2008).
 - Andrade, Dale. “Westmoreland Was Right: Learning the Wrong Lessons from the Vietnam War.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19, no. 2 (2008): 145–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310802061349>.
- Thematic Readings
 - **Conflict Status:** Prados, John. *The Blood Road: The Ho Chi Minh Trail and the Vietnam War*. Wiley, (1999).
 - **Human Dignity and Political Community:** McLeod, Mark W. “Indigenous Peoples and the Vietnamese Revolution, 1930-1975.” *Journal of World History* 10, no. 2 (1999): 353–89. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078784>.
 - **Law and Conflict:** Greenwood, Christopher. “The Concept of War in Modern International Law.” *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1987): 283–306. <https://doi.org/10.1093/iclqaj/36.2.283>.
 - **Reasons for Restraint:** Levie, Howard S. “Maltreatment of Prisoners of War in Vietnam.” *Boston University Law Review* 48 (1968): 323.
 - **Sexual Violence in Conflict:** Weaver, Gina Marie. *Ideologies of Forgetting: Rape in the Vietnam War*. SUNY Press, (2012).

- **National Security and Political Cleavages:** Kalyvas, Stathis N., and Matthew Adam Kocher. “Ethnic Cleavages and Irregular War: Iraq and Vietnam.” *Politics & Society* 35, no. 2 (2007): 183–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329207302403>.
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- **Intelligence & Institutions:** Andrade, Dale, and James H. Willbanks. “CORDS/Phoenix: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam for the Future.” *Military Review*, March-April (2006), 9–23.
- **Torture:** Macmaster, Neil. “Torture: From Algiers to Abu Ghraib.” *Race & Class* 46, no. 2 (2004): 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396804047722>.
- **One-Sided Violence:** Clodfelter, Mark. *The Limits of Air Power: The American Bombing of North Vietnam*. University of Nebraska Press, (2006).
- Further Reading
 - Arreguín-Toft, Ivan. “How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict.” *International Security* 26, no. 1 (2001): 93–128. <https://doi.org/10.1162/016228801753212868>.
 - Ang, Cheng Guan. *The Vietnam War from the Other Side*. Routledge, (2002).
- Other material
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 - Herr, Michael. *Dispatches*. Picador, (1991).
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11.4 The Global War on Terror

Is the “War on Terror” a war? Does it count as a dirty war? This case study is selected to demonstrate the contemporary relevance of much of the core course material. One key difference between this case study and the others is that the war on terror draws attention to the unclear spatial and temporal boundaries of war, as well as the role of ideas, institutions, and technologies in the constitution of war itself. The definitional question of what, if anything, related to the war on terror actually counts as a war, and why, lies at the heart of this case study, with wider applicability to the rest of the course.

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 - Carvin, Stephanie. “Caught in the Cold: International Humanitarian Law and Prisoners of War During the Cold War.” *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 11, no. 1 (2012): 67–92. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/krl005>.
 - Savage, Charlie. *Power Wars: The Relentless Rise of Presidential Authority and Secrecy*. Little, Brown; Company, (2015).

- Thematic Readings
 - **Conflict Status:** Schmitt, Michael N. "Charting the Legal Geography of Non-International Armed Conflict." *International Law Studies* 90 (2014): 1–19.
 - **Human Dignity and Political Community:** Chesney, Robert. "Who May Be Killed? Anwar Al-Awlaki as a Case Study in the International Legal Regulation of Lethal Force." *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law* 13 (2010): 3–60.
 - **Law and Conflict:** Bradley, Curtis A., and Jack L. Goldsmith. "Obama's AUMF Legacy." *American Journal of International Law* 110, no. 4 (2016): 628–45.
 - **Reasons for Restraint:** Elsea, Jennifer K. *Treatment of 'Battlefield Detainees' in the War on Terrorism*. DIANE Publishing, (2014).; Elsea, Jennifer K. "Presidential Authority to Detain 'Enemy Combatants'." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (2003): 568–601. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1741-5705.00007>.
 - **Sexual Violence in Conflict:** Tétreault, Mary Ann. "The Sexual Politics of Abu Ghraib: Hegemony, Spectacle, and the Global War on Terror." *NWSA Journal*, (2006): 33–50.
 - **National Security and Political Cleavages:** Fisher, Louis. *Presidential War Power*. Third. University Press of Kansas, (2013).
 - **Population Control:** Steyn, Johan. "Guantanamo Bay: The Legal Black Hole." *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (2004): 1–15.
 - **Political Repression:** Welch, Kyle. "The Patriot Act and Crisis Legislation: The Unintended Consequences of Disaster Lawmaking." *Capital University Law Review* 43 (2015): 481.
 - **Intelligence & Institutions:** Blakeley, Ruth. "Dirty Hands, Clean Conscience? The CIA Inspector General's Investigation of 'Enhanced Interrogation Techniques' in the War on Terror and the Torture Debate." *Journal of Human Rights* 10, no. 4 (2011): 544–61.
 - **Torture:** Luban, David. "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb." *Virginia Law Review* 91 (2005): 1425–61.
 - **One-Sided Violence:** McDonald, Jack. *Enemies Known and Unknown: Targeted Killings in America's Transnational Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2017).
- Further Reading
 - Jordan, Javier. "The Effectiveness of the Drone Campaign Against Al Qaeda Central: A Case Study." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37, no. 1 (2014): 4–29.
 - Johnsen, Dawn. "The Lawyers' War: Counterterrorism from Bush to Obama to Trump." *Foreign Affairs* 96 (2017): 148.
- Other material
 - -Wright, Evan. *Generation Kill*. Corgi, (2009).
 - *Zero Dark Thirty*, 2012. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow.

11.5 The Second Congo War

The Second Congo War was one of the bloodiest conflicts of the late 20th and early 21st Century. It is also a conflict demonstrating the relevance of the course topics to the study of civil wars. It is also a conflict that you could be forgiven for never having heard of, due to a relative lack of media coverage. The war featured war crimes and massacres on all sides, and drew in states from across the continent. To give some sense of the scale of the conflict, the debate about the death toll is whether the excess deaths caused by the conflict are between just under 1,000,000 or in the region of 5,400,000. In short, if you are looking for work on the logic of war crimes and attacks upon civilians, this is a good case study.

- Introductory Readings
 - Reyntjens, Filip. "Briefing: The Second Congo War: More Than a Remake." *African Affairs* 98, no. 391 Reyntjens (1999): 241–50. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/723629>.
 - Prunier, Gérard. *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe*. Oxford University Press, (2008).
- Thematic Readings
 - **Conflict Status:** Carayannis, Tatiana. "The Complex Wars of the Congo: Towards a New Analytic Approach." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 38, nos. 2-3 (2003): 232–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002190960303800206>.
 - **Human Dignity and Political Community:** Smis, Stefaan, and Wamu Oyatambwe. "Complex Political Emergencies, the International Community & the Congo Conflict." *Review of African Political Economy* 29, nos. 93-94 Smis and Oyatambwe (2002): 411–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240208704630>.
 - **Law and Conflict:** Davis, Laura. "Power Shared and Justice Shelved: The Democratic Republic of Congo." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 17, no. 2 (2013): 289–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2013.752948>.
 - **Reasons for Restraint:** Samset, Ingrid. "Conflict of Interests or Interests in Conflict? Diamonds & War in the Drc." *Review of African Political Economy* 29, nos. 93-94 (2002): 463–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240208704633>.
 - **Sexual Violence in Conflict:** Baaz, Maria Eriksson, and Maria Stern. "Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (Drc)." *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2009): 495–518. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27735106>.
 - **National Security and Political Cleavages:** Clark, John F. "A Constructivist Account of the Congo Wars." *African Security* 4, no. 3 (2011): 147–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.599262>.
 - **Population Control:** Verweijen, Judith. "Military Business and the Business of the Military in the Kivus." *Review of African Political Economy* 40, no. 135 (2013): 67–82.
 - **Political Repression:** Matti, Stephanie A. "The Democratic Republic of the Congo? Corruption, Patronage, and Competitive Authoritarianism in the Drc."

Africa Today 56, no. 4 (2010): 42–61.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/aft.2010.56.4.42>.

- **Intelligence & Institutions:** Meagher, Kate. “The Strength of Weak States? Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa.” *Development and Change* 43, no. 5 (2012): 1073–1101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2012.01794.x>.
- **Torture:** Baaz, Maria Eriksson, and Maria Stern. “Making Sense of Violence: Voices of Soldiers in the Congo (Drc).” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 46, no. 1 (2008): 57–86. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X07003072>.
- **One-Sided Violence:** Karstedt, Susanne. “Contextualizing Mass Atrocity Crimes: Moving Toward a Relational Approach.” *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 9, no. 1 (2013): 383–404. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-102612-134016>.
- Further Reading
 - Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People’s History*. Zed Books, (2002).
 - Berdal, Mats. “The State of UN Peacekeeping: Lessons from Congo.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 5 (2018): 721–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2016.1215307>.
 - Reyntjens, Filip. *The Great African War: Congo and Regional Geopolitics, 1996-2006*. Cambridge University Press, (2009)
- Other material
 - Tansi, Sony Labou. *Life and a Half: A Novel*. Indiana University Press, (2011).
 - Dongala, Emmanuel. *Johnny Mad Dog*. Picador, (2006).
 - Wainaina, Binyavanga. “How to Write About Africa.” *Granta* 92 (2005). [Available online here](#)

12 Further Reading

Introduction

This is further reading material for the course. It is the product of a literature search done by the 2019-20 cohort of the course. I hope that you will find it useful, and that the next generation of students taking this course will benefit from your work this year.

12.1 Human Dignity and Political Community in War and National Security

Introduction

The idea of Political community in war encapsulates many different debates. Various questions have arisen as to the legitimate use of force by the state over different parties. One of the major debates within this field is how citizenship factors into in war-for example, whether it is right for a nation to treat its own citizens as combatants and deny them a judicial process. The debate also revolves around humanitarian causes, namely legal

concepts such as the Responsibility to Protect, which claims that any state has the right to protect other citizens from the actions of their own government. This also leads to the central questions regarding the role of human dignity-what do we owe to each other simply for being human? Is this basic human dignity mitigated by war, or is it non-derogable? Are a nation's citizens owed more or different rights than non-citizens? These different case studies and sources discuss various aspects of the issue of citizenship and human dignity in war.

Introductory Readings

Kelman, Herbert C. "The Conditions, Criteria, and Dialectics of Human Dignity: A Transnational Perspective." *International Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (September 1977): 529–52. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600236>.

Mani, Rama. "Rebuilding an Inclusive Political Community After War." *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (2005): 511–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010605060452>.

Case Study Readings

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- Sheinin, David M. K. *Consent of the Damned: Ordinary Argentines in the Dirty War*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012.
- Smith, Lindsay Adams. "Identifying Democracy: Citizenship, DNA, and Identity in Postdictatorship Argentina" *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 41, no. 6 (February 2016): 1037–62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243916658708>.

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- Asmal, Kader. *If Law is the Enemy: Human Rights in Northern Ireland Britain's Responsibilities*. Britain; Ireland Human Rights Project, 1990.

The Vietnam Wars

- Thi Liên, Tran. "The Challenge for Peace Within South Vietnam's Catholic Community: A History of Peace Activism." *Peace & Change* 38, no. 4 (2013): 446–73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pech.12040>.
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- Donnell, John C. "Pacification Reassessed." *Asian Survey* 7, no. 8 (1967): 567–76. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2642597>.

The Global War on Terror

- Lauritzen, Paul. "Counterterrorism, Dignity, and the Rule of Law." *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 95, no. 4 (2012): 452–67. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/soundings.95.4.0452>.
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The Second Congo War

- Meger, Sara. "Rape of the Congo: Understanding Sexual Violence in the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 28, no. 2 (2010): 119–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001003736728>.
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Theme Readings

War/Warfare

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- Carey, Sabine C, Mark Gibney, and Steven C Poe. *The Politics of Human Rights: The Quest for Dignity*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
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Strategic Studies

- Barkawi, Tarak. "Strategy as a Vocation: Weber, Morgenthau and Modern Strategic Studies." *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998): 159–84. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210598001594>.

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- Hammerstad, Anne. "Whose Security? UNHCR, Refugee Protection and State Security After the Cold War." *Security Dialogue* 31, no. 4 (2000): 391–403. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26296710>.

Normative Theory

- Donnelly, Jack. "Normative Versus Taxonomic Humanity: Varieties of Human Dignity in the Western Tradition." *Journal of Human Rights* 14, no. 1 (2015): 1–22.
- Schachter, Oscar. "Human Dignity as a Normative Concept." *American Journal of International Law* 77, no. 4 (1983): 848–54. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2202536>.

Further Reading

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Nutt, Cullen G. "The CIA's Mole in the Viet Cong: Learning from a Rare Success." *Intelligence and National Security* 34, no. 7 (January 2019): 962–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2019.1646959>.

12.2 Regulating War and Warfare

Introduction

The challenges of regulating war and warfare are reflected in the evolution of international law. Traditional legal approaches sought to frame concepts such as state sovereignty and the distinction between combatants and non-combatants. In light of new developments, however, scholars have increasingly challenged the applicability of existing regulations. Some highlight changes to the character of war, including the impact of globalisation and the rise of non-interstate conflict. Others note shifts in the participants and parties to war, highlighting the salience of non-state actors and a blurring of the distinction between combatants and non-combatants.

At the tactical level, technological advances have created further difficulties for the regulation of warfare or highlighted gaps in existing legal structures. Weapons targeted at the environment or the use of rape in conflict have outpaced legal frameworks designed to address traditional interstate conflict.

Moreover, the fields of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency have provided fertile ground for examining the regulation of war, with states facing a range of non-state adversaries and confronting the contested applicability of IHL and IHRL. For example, whilst the criminalisation policy adopted in Northern Ireland might contrast with new legal mechanisms created during the War on Terror, others see a clearer lineage born out of a state's continued ability to define its own conflicts.

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Wallace, Geoffrey. "Regulating Conflict: Historical Legacies and State Commitment to the Laws of War1." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 2 (2011): 151–72.
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Draper, G. I. A. D. "The Ethical and Juridical Status of Constraints in War." *Military Law Review* 55 (1972): 169–86.
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Case Study Readings

Argentina

- Grandin, Greg. "The Instruction of Great Catastrophe: Truth Commissions, National History, and State Formation in Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala." *The American Historical Review* 110, no. 1 (2005): 46–67.
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- Schwartz, Daniel W. "Rectifying Twenty-Five Years of Material Breach: Argentina and the Legacy of the Dirty War in International Law Comment." *Emory International Law Review* 18 (2004): 317.

Northern Ireland

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- Neumann, Peter R. "The Myth of Ulsterization in British Security Policy in Northern Ireland." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26, no. 5 (2003): 365–77.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100390227971>.

The Vietnam Wars

- Martin, Susan B. "Norms, Military Utility, and the Use/Non-Use of Weapons: The Case of Anti-Plant and Irritant Agents in the Vietnam War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 3 (2016): 321–64.
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The Global War on Terror

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<https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/sjjlc23&i=987>.

The Second Congo War

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Theme Readings

War/Warfare

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Political Repression

- Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., and Kiyoteru Tsutsui. "Justice Lost! The Failure of International Human Rights Law to Matter Where Needed Most." *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 4 (2007): 407–25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640538>.

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Strategic Studies

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Normative Theory

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Further Reading

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Vorobej, Mark. "Just War Theory and the Invasion of Afghanistan." *Peace Research* 41, no. 2 (2009): 29–58. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23608089>.

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Franck, Thomas. "When Nations Collide, Must Law Be Silent?" *Peace Review* 19, no. 2 (2007): 227–35.

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12.3 Reasons for Restraint

Introduction

The two bodies of law that apply restraining principles in war are international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). While these two sets of law share similarities in their spirit of upholding a basic humanity and may sometimes be complementary (Qureshi 2017), the problems arise when IHL and IHRL conflict. Such occurrences are becoming increasingly common (Draper 2011), especially with regard to the war on terror, where an 'armed conflict' necessary for IHL is uncertain. This uncertainty allows states to pick and choose the legal principles which suit them best, rather than keep to a stringent set of restraints which normative theorists argue is crucial in war. Restraint is crucial not just to keep operations legal, but also for a more fundamental purpose of viewing the enemy as human (Evangelidi 2018). Law – especially in war – is much more often followed when it is linked to morals that the actors value

(Stephens 2019). This trend must be emphasized because it is difficult to apply restraint at the tactical level even when officers know its value on the strategic level.

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12.4 Is Any War Clean?

Introduction

The risk of sexual violence is a constant in armed conflict, though like warfare itself, its effects, motives, strategic logic, and perpetration is quite varied. Sexual violence “occurs to varying extent and takes distinct forms” in warfare, depending on particular social context (Wood, 2006 p. 307). In line with this variation and contextual nature, this literature search collects examples of sexual violence from a range of historical experiences, from its use as an instrument of state terror in internal conflicts, to same sex violence, to its use as a political tactic.

Corresponding to this historical breadth, a variety of disciplines have analyzed sexual violence in conflict. The predominant question is one of motivation: what engenders sexual violence and explains its occurrence in war? Sexual violence has been linked to the strategic aims of genocide, as in the former Yugoslavia. Feminist scholars have linked rape to gendered forms of political repression. Security scholars have analyzed sexual violence among internal government forces. Normative scholars have conducted meta-analyses of the study of sexual violence as too focused on quantitative analysis and not enough on interrogating its normative motivations.

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12.5 Treason, Political Community, and National Security

Introduction

The modern literature on this vast topic predominantly revolves around the definitional work of Carl Schmitt's on his Theory of the Partisan. It is a very Western European-based work on the nature of political community and the relationship between enmity and

politics, in the specific context of the rise of nation-states. Research and analysis on more recent dirty wars offer more varied and comparative literature on the topic, moving away from Schmitt's strict frame. However, many will also find the basis of the concepts of treason, enmity and political community in work dating back to the 17th century, in particular in Hobbes' political philosophy, and in literature analyzing power and warfare in ancient regimes.

The modern nation-state defines what is in the 'national interest', directly impacting the internal politics that sets the parameters for citizenship, patriotism and treason. Partisanship, rebellions and insurgencies for example are often considered as a by-product of the build-up and institutionalization of a political order that aims to eliminate differences, structurally but also rhetorically as the idea of nation (the Anderson's "imagined communities") and sovereignty are a construct, not a given, in which unity, enmity and multi-faceted divisions, domestic or foreign, interact in a complex way.

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12.6 Strategy and Population Control

Introduction

The theme of Strategy and Population Control is addressed by scholars with various backgrounds and academic focuses. However, despite the abundance of the material, a few major themes were identified during the literature search and review. First, most researchers tend to describe specific means of population control, such as rape, torture, propaganda and information control. This suggests that population control is not monolithic, but varies widely depending on context. Thus, as identified by the readings, population control usually occurs as part of a cost/benefit analysis, with the unethical nature of the acts being weighed against their political advantages. Secondly, as seen in the case studies, many examples of population control occur with ethnic or cultural motivations. Therefore, the analyses of causes and behaviors of population control are generally specific, to the individual level; which provides relatively subjective insight for a reader. Thirdly, there is no consensus on the definition of the topic, as understandings change based on the frame one uses to analyse it, such as politics, law and psychology. Overall, the literature search established new boundaries for the potential future research in the topic.

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12.7 Political Warfare and Political Emergencies

Introduction

Political emergencies are often rooted in state collapse and therefore, understanding the underpinnings of statehood is essential to understanding PEs. With the recent nature of conflicts being characterized by these emergencies, these 'small wars' need to be studied under different lenses in order to extract their causes and consequences. Additionally, political emergencies are often characterized by the interaction of multiple non-state and state actors, as in the case study of The Second Congo War. Motivated by mining interests the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was also heightened by disease and humanitarian crises which are often hallmarks of political emergencies.

Political Warfare, also known as psychological warfare, is a state tool dedicated to output propaganda to the needs of a war. This is done so through overt and covert means to influence the morale of the enemy or/and of an ally. Northern Ireland provides an example of political warfare, in part in the form of Britain engaging in a propaganda war with the IRA. The British government installed propaganda agencies and even forged letters to incriminate some of the IRA senior individuals, all in attempts to gain the upper hand in this dirty war.

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12.8 Identity, Identification, and Intelligence Institutions

Introduction

Secrecy and intelligence services have long been means for states to protect themselves their national security interests. The role identity and identification play in these institutions, as many authors have argued, can be crucial to how these conflicts play out. Intelligence agencies use the cloak of secrecy since the information gathered would not be available to the public. Yet nowadays the role of secrecy is increasingly being challenged by public demands for accountability, especially after leaks which revealed the extensiveness of surveillance in Western states. This may create a problem for states regarding the safeguarding of national security without a reliance on excessive secrecy. States now have to find a new balance between national security and secrecy within the context of identity and identification.

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12.9 Torture

Introduction

The boundaries of legitimacy, morality, and legal permissibility relating to the employment of torture and enhanced interrogation techniques can become blurred by states in times of crisis. Those regimes that have openly engaged in such methods in order to extract information, or in many cases exact punishment, often seek legal loopholes (such as the

denial of protected status to belligerents), or justification which places the security of the state and safety of the population above the rights of the individual. One oft-used justification is the ticking time-bomb theory, which would allow torture in extreme cases. Another common device employed by state actors is the attempt to restrict the definition of torture to exclude specific methods. The risk of hiding behind such legal ambiguity is the normalization of inhumane practices, and the possibility of impunity for inhumane acts not defined as torture specifically. The literature provides numerous case studies and theoretical models to inform definitions of torture and illuminate the practices, justifications, and both moral and legal paradoxes, which serve to highlight the disconnect between liberal democracies and the value they attach to human rights, and their resort to torture in dealing with terrorism or dissenters.

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12.10 Targeted Killing and One-Sided Violence

Introduction

Violence in war is often perpetrated and experienced asymmetrically. The increased use of targeted killing as a strategy in contemporary warfare further highlights and exacerbates war's disparity as violence can be enacted with little to no risk for one side. Technological developments, particularly in the field of drone warfare, have demonstrated targeted killing to be an effective means of achieving national security objectives in contemporary conflicts. In particular, Targeted Killing has been adopted as a central tactic by the US in the global war on terror.

However, with increased use has come extensive criticism primarily surrounding the legality and morality of targeted killing as a method of warfare. Despite these criticisms, the use of targeted killing appears only to have increased and shows no sign of discontinuation. The literature addresses questions associated with the morality and ethics of identifying and classifying targets. In other words 'Who is a legitimate target?' and 'What constitutes legitimate violence?'

There are limitations that are presented in the literature. For example, the strategic effectiveness and benefits of targeted killing are not questioned, rather the morality of such tactics. The absence of legal infrastructure explains to a certain extent the lack of clear regulation surrounding such issues. In addition, there remain key debates surrounding the distinction between targeting killing and assassination.

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13 Extended Learning

This chapter is entirely optional and contains information about my personal lab. Again, this is entirely optional, and not tied to the course. I started my lab to experiment with teaching practice and collective research projects aligned with my research interests. The idea is that lab members co-learn, develop joint research projects, and work towards publication at an appropriate level. If you are looking to round out your CV with practical experience, or develop personal research towards publication, this may be of interest.

13.1 Ethics, Technology & Conflict Lab

The lab exists to promote innovative approaches to the study of war and conflict. In practical terms, the lab is a structure to enable you to learn research skills in a short period of time, to develop your own field of expertise, to experiment with scalable research methods and digital technologies, and to get practical experience in academic research for your CV. The underlying idea is to experiment and test the limits of what is possible in a way that is mutually beneficial to all persons involved.⁶²

This is my personal lab. The focus of lab work is the rather wide remit of “Culture, Technology and War”. If you are a student on one of my courses, the chances are that there’s something you are interested in within this frame. The central idea of the lab is to provide a space to experiment with teaching methods, and to enable students to develop their practical research and communication skills through project based learning by engaging with ongoing research projects at all stages of development.

There are four strands of activity to engage with:

- Skills development. About a third of time spent in the lab is dedicated to the development of practical skills, most importantly experimenting with developing the skills required to undertake group or personal projects. We’ll experiment with learning sprints, collaboration technologies, and whole-cohort research projects alongside more standard elements like drafting and editing your prior academic work to suit different audiences.

⁶² This means no filling envelopes, no fetching coffees, or any other drudge-work associated with internships.

- Research projects. A fundamental aim of the lab is to enable groups to experiment with research projects⁶³ that are devised by lab participants. In other words, follow your nose. This element of lab activity is intended to be creative, with the idea of producing minimum viable research products, that may be the basis for further, formal, research.
- Communicating research. A third element of lab participation is the development of your work (and group work) to publication standard. This involves working through simulated peer-review processes to develop working papers, blog posts, data sets, reports, bibliographies, or further.
- Professional experience. I have a range of ongoing research projects. If you need, or would like, experience of working on academic research projects, then we can agree upon a set of tasks that would suit your CV.

13.2 Research Projects for 2021/22

These are the options for practical research projects for 2020/21. If you are interested on working on any of these, please get in touch.

- Literature Reviews
 - Strategy and climate change
 - Literature on conflict and climate change, and examining it to analyse its potential consequences for strategy and warfare in the 21st century
 - Literature on strategic studies, and examining it to analyse the extent to which it is informed by current scientific assessments of the impact of climate change in the 21st century
- Theory Building
 - War and Infrastructure
 - Studying theories of infrastructure and their relevance to war and armed conflict. Ultimate aim: how do concepts of infrastructure enhance our understanding of war?
- Case Studies/Qualitative Methods
 - Data Ethics in Armed Conflict
 - Identifying interesting uses of biometric recognition systems in contemporary warfare
 - Mapping the development of artillery radars and counterfire systems in the 20th century
 - The Maintenance of Military Power
 - Identifying key military platforms that are/were used well beyond their initial expected lifespan
- Datasets/Quantitative Methods

⁶³ Ones that do not require research ethics approval.

- War and Slavery
 - Classifying forms of coerced labour in the context of armed conflicts from the Correlates of War dataset
- Historical Research
 - A history of British surveillance controversies
 - Identifying and evaluating state surveillance controversies since the formation of the Home Office

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