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# DIRTY WARS

# *Contents*

# *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, ebook, and static website.[1]

[1] Please note that the formatting of the ebook might not be optimum.

- The pdf version of this handbook is available here.
- The ebook version of this handbook is available here.
- The website version of this handbook is available here.

## *0.1 Auditing*

My auditing policy is simple: Students may audit this course so long as it does not disadvantage students who have opted to take the module for assessment. In practice, this means that so long as there is physical room to attend the lecture series, you have the option of auditing in person. It is unlikely that there will be space for students to audit the seminar component of the module, as seminars tend to be assigned with the optimum number of students for a seminar session.

Please note that the lecture sessions involve small-group discussions. I therefore require students attending lectures in person to have done the same reading as students on the module are expected to have done for these sessions. *Failure to do so may lead to me withdrawing my permission for you to audit the module.*

Please email me with your request to audit the course prior to attending.

## *0.2 Tasks to Complete Before The First Class*

- Skim read this handbook
- Perform the baseline reflection task in Chapter 9
- Read the readings for week 1

# 1
# Introduction

This chapter is designed to give you a big picture overview of the course, explains the course structure, sets some expectations for behaviour, and explains how to use the 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 violence, normative theory, and strategy. As a subset of that, the course focuses upon the role of institutions and institutional beliefs in war and national security. In particular, how do ideas and cultural beliefs shape state institutions 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.

## *1.2 Course Structure*

The core course has five pillars:

- A main lecture series
- Two research lecture series
- Two series of seminars
- Group research work
- Your assessed work

Each of these are designed to work together, but also to stand independently of one another. That way, if one thing fails (a fire alarm causes a lecture cancellation, illness prevents you from meeting for group research, etc) then the rest can carry on regardless with minimal interruption.

If you are unable to make a teaching session (lecture or seminar), please complete an asynchronous learning task (detailed below). These are designed to enable students who cannot attend a teaching session in person to engage with the course material in a productive way. They should take no more than 15 minutes to complete, so should not add to your workload in a significant manner.

## *1.3 The Primary Lecture Series: What Makes a War a 'Dirty' War?*

This is an 11 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. The focus of this course will be upon the application of these themes to four case studies, readings for which are detailed in Chapter 3.

Please note that the lectures will be about two thirds lecture, and one third small group discussion/full cohort discussion.

## *1.4 Research Lecture Series: Counting The Dead*

The first research lecture series is designed to complement and prepare you for the final evaluation for this module: writing a 5000 word research essay. In this lecture series, I will be explaining and guiding you through one of my research projects that relates to the course. However the point of the research lecture series is that you will be using a substantial portion of your time in class to discuss and debate your own research projects. Unlike lectures in the first term, we will be paying specific attention to the practicalities of designing and conducting a research project in each and every class. Roughly 50% of the

readings for this section of the course will relate to research design and research methods.

This year's research lectures analyse the debates over civilian casualties caused by the Global Coalition Against Daesh in Iraq and Syria. The lectures will explain the overall research project in tandem with discussions to enable you to design your own 5000 word research project. These lectures are designed to guide you through the topic, and to connect it to lectures in term 1. Each lecture/seminar session will include discussion designed to get you to reflect upon key problems and questions associated with the design of research projects.

### *1.5 Research Lecture Series: Digital Repression*

This research series examines the concept of digital repression, that is, political repression as it intersects with the digital technologies and services that now sustain daily life worldwide.

The key case study for this whole series is the ongoing repression of Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang. This might seem like picking on one country, but Xinjiang is an important case study for a number of reasons. First, we can contrast the prior international outrage at Chinese repression in Tibet with the relatively muted response to Xinjiang. Second, Xinjiang in many ways represents the maturation of sets of technologies, such as recognition systems, that widen the state's capability to control a population. However third, and as important, is that we should guard against the narrative of novelty when it comes to the use of digital technologies for political repression. The artifacts and systems might be new, but the ultimate purpose and goal of repression might not have changed that much.

### *1.6 First Seminar Series: Reciprocity and Retribution*

The study of the morality/ethics of war takes three primary forms. Normative theorists discuss and seek to identify the morally permissible basis for the resort to war, and the use of force within war. Interlinked with this is the study of traditions of just war, a form of intellectual history that is closely entwined with work on just war theory. Lastly, there are a lot of people who study the ethics of war for the purposes of improving military professionalism.

We're going to be doing something a little different.

This year's seminar series centres upon the role of retribution in reciprocity. We typically find discussion of reciprocity in altruistic terms, whereas here we will focus primarily upon the reverse: reciprocity generated by the threat or fear of retribution. The actions and activities covered in this seminar series are, by and large, both

illegal under current international law, as well as generally held to be immoral by just war theorists.

## *1.7 Second Seminar Series: Coercion and Contemporary COIN*

This seminar series extends the course, reflecting the intersection between the course, my current research interests, and areas of contemporary interest. Term 2 seminars change each year so you will in effect be taking a unique course. As such there will be more flexibility in terms of focus of these sessions to reflect the interests of the student cohort. Feedback from term 1 will be used to align these sessions to student interests.[1]

[1] Within reason, and also down to my professional judgement.

The second seminar series examines the inclusion and exclusion of normative evaluations of military strategy and operational practice. In this seminar series we will examine the relationship between counterinsurgency (COIN) and political repression in theory and practice. In particular, the series will examine how contemporary COIN as practiced by liberal democracies often shies away from explicit engagement with the repressive elements of COIN practice.

## *1.8 Group Research Work*

The group research work consists of academic tasks that are designed to enhance your research skills and develop your ability to work as part of a team. There two cycles of group project work associated with the main lecture series, and further cycle in the full year version of the course. Each of the tasks is designed to produce a learning resource for all members of the course to use and enhance their own studies. In term 1, the first task will be to perform a literature search, the second task will be to develop a case study to the same standard/specification as those contained within this handbook. There is no group work in term 2.

## *1.9 Your Assessed Work*

The assessments for this course are a 2500 word literature review and a 5000 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 5000 word essay is built into the lectures of term 2.

### *1.10 Teaching Session Structure*

There are two types of teaching session on this course: lectures and seminars. They will run a little different to how you may have been taught before, or may be taught in other modules. You will be discussing questions in small groups (3-5 students) throughout both sessions. 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.

Lectures are lecture/seminar sessions. That means that you will be engaging in small group discussion at points throughout the teaching session. The structure of each session is this:

- Theory discussion
- Introduction and core lecture
- Small group discussion
- Case studies
- Wider context
- Questions and answers

The **theory discussion** section discusses the theoretical discussion videos on KEATS. You should watch these ahead of the session, or read the transcripts. There is a question set for this discussion in each lecture, you should consider an answer to this question prior to the class. The session starts with small group discussions where you compare and contrast your answer to this question, followed by a whole of class discussion where we will compare and contrast different approaches to answering the question.

The **core lecture** contains the lecture detailed in the handbook. Feel free to raise your hand at any point if you have a question.

The **small group discussion** is a discussion related to the core lecture. Here I will usually set a question that is not available prior to the teaching session. Again you will be working in small groups at first, and then in a whole-class discussion.

In the **case studies** section, I will connect the core lecture to each of the five case studies detailed in this handbook. I may also point to other important instances of the lecture topic, but the point here is to connect the thematic lecture material to the case studies in a consistent manner.

The **wider context** section is more free-form. The topics covered by this course, and the way they are dealt with here, are often in the news. This section is reserved time to discuss current events, feel free to butt-in if you've seen/read something related to the core lecture (or

raised in class discussions) here.

If there's time, I'll run a **questions & answers** session at the end.

The other type of teaching session is the seminar. These 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.

## *1.11 Asynchronous Learning Tasks*

Asynchronous Learning Tasks are small tasks that are designed to enable students not physically present in teaching sessions to engage with the course. If you know that you will not be able to attend a teaching session, please complete one ahead of the session. If you are unable to make a teaching session at short notice, please complete one within 2 working days.[2] There will be a post on the News forum on KEATS for each week of the class. Please reply to it to complete your Asynchronous Learning Task. Please keep posts short (150 words maximum) as this isn't intended to add significantly to your workload.

[2] I have to write this guide prior to knowing the day/time of teaching sessions, but I'm not going to ask you to work weekends. If you are ill for an extended period, please complete the task within 2 working days of being healthy.

Asynchronous Learning Tasks:

- Read the assigned readings for the session, and explain the relevance of one of them to a particular event in one of the case studies in Chapter 3. Provide a link to a digital resource that provides background information about the event.
- Identify a relationship between one of the readings for this session and one from a prior teaching session that you find interesting. Explain the reason for your interest.
- Identify and explain a key argument in one of the readings from the session that you disagree with. Explain your disagreement. If possible, provide a link to a piece of academic work that supports your disagreement.
- Respond to one of the discussion questions (found in the lecture slides, or the set questions for the seminar). Remember to identify the question you're responding to!
- Identify a connection between the lecture or seminar theme and a contemporary conflict. Explain the connection and provide a link to a digital resource that enables the reader to understand the theme in the context of the conflict.

## *1.12 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.[3] 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.[4]

As you may have noticed, this course places a heavy emphasis on group learning (small group discussions, seminars, small group projects). 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.

The core reading for this module is intentionally short (4-5 articles/chapters total per week), and this is the amount of reading that will enable you to engage with the course. 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] That's 0900-1800. 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.

[4] That's 0900-1800, Monday to Friday.

### *1.13 Attendance and Asynchronous Learning Tasks*

All elements of this course are compulsory (including attendance at teaching sessions). However, I understand that students balancing significant outside commitments may on occasion be forced to miss sessions. If you are unable to make a session, please keep up with the reading, and please keep in contact with group members for research projects.

If you have to miss a session, please let me know, and complete an Asynchronous Learning Task, detailed above.

### *1.14 How To Use This Course Handbook*

Chapters 2 - 8 contain guides to the course readings, case studies, lectures and seminars. Chapter 9 provides a guide to developing your skills over the course of this module, including a basic guide to producing academic work. Chapters 10 and 11 are guides to the assessments for the course, and group project work. Chapter 12 provides extension material, and there is a bibliography for all work cited in this handbook.

# 2
# *Reading*

This is a course about the overlap between war and political repression. In a wider sense, it is about the role that normative evalution plays in a variety of competing conceptual frames for describing organised political violence. A particular feature of the course is that we will be looking at the considerable overlap between war and political repression, primarily in internal conflicts, insurgencies, terrorism, and instances of violent political repression.

This is a guide to the course vernacular. This is necessary because we'll be covering a number of topics from different disciplinary perspectives. This creates a problem, in that a turn of phrase in one discipline might be a term of art in another. What one discipline holds to be a stable object of concern is, from the perspective of another, a contested concept. Sometimes people use completely different terms to refer to the same set of events. For instance, a strategist's *war* is (in the present day) an international lawyer's *international armed conflict*.

The expected reading for the course is contained in the week-by-week readings. This chapter exists as a backup in case you are having difficulty putting the pieces together. You are not expected to become conversant in a half-dozen disciplines over the course of a single module, but you are expected to have an understanding of the general ideas motivating these different ways of studying war and armed conflict.

## *2.1 Do I Need to Buy Anything?*

No. The library should provide digital access to all resources on the course.[1] That said, there's a couple of books that you might want to pick up a copy of, because we'll be relying upon them a lot during the course.

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

We'll be relying upon Helen Frowe's (2015) *The Ethics of War and Peace* for the first seminar series, alongside Mark Timmons' (2013) *Moral Theory*. In term 2, we'll be relying upon Neta C. Crawford's

(2013) *Accountability for Killing* for a research series, and Austin Long's (2016) *The Soul of Armies* as prep for the second seminar series.[2]

[2] Your studies in term 2 will be immeasurably easier if you read these over Christmas

## *2.2 Okay, Where Do I Start?*

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 (2007b) *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

## *2.3 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,[3] or illegitimate?[4] Let's start with a basic unit of analysis: When is it right, or wrong, for the state to kill someone?[5] 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 interrelated 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.[6] We find concepts running through all three disciplines, like justice, but we also find significant differences.

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

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

[5] 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.

[6] 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 legitimation 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.[7] 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.

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

## *2.4 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 (2007b) *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*.[8]
- 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,[9] try Jack McDonald's (2017) *Enemies Known and Unknown*.

[8] 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

[9] Hey, some people are interested in that sometimes…

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

## *2.5 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 pacificist, more that their work doesn't seek to provide a legitimating structure for violence.

## *2.6 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.

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.

## *2.7 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,[10] does your chosen text engage with these problems, or largely avoid them?

[10] And that's before you get to disagreements over the interpretation of facts…

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 omniescent 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.

## *2.8 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 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.[11] 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.

[11] Sometimes universal pretence masks underlying power dynamics, etc.

# 3
# *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. Each lecture in the main lecture series will contain a section that directly ties the lecture theme to each of these case studies, so as to demonstrate the variation in each case. You are not expected to become an expert on all five cases, but you should understand the basic chronology and events of each, and read at least two in depth.

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. Please read these as soon as possible, as they are the effective minimum that will allow you to understand the relevance of the conflict to the individual lectures.

The second section contains readings that tie individual lectures to the case study. These are for you to connect the thematic lectures presented each week to each 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.

### *3.1 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 (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.

## *3.2 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.

## *3.3 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*.
  - **Population Control:** Catton, Philip E. "Counter-Insurgency and Nation Building: The Strategic Hamlet Programme in South Vietnam, 1961–1963." *The International History Review* 21, no. 4 (1999): 918–40. *https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.1999.9640883*.
  - **Political Repression:** Miller, Edward. "Religious Revival and the Politics of Nation Building: Reinterpreting the 1963 'Buddhist Crisis' in South Vietnam." *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 6 (2015): 1903–62. *https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X12000935*.
  - **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
  - *Hamburger Hill*, 1987. Directed by John Irvin.
  - Herr, Michael. *Dispatches*. Picador, (1991).
  - Ninh, Bao. *The Sorrow of War*. Vintage Classics, (1994).

## *3.4 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.

- Introductory Readings
  - 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.

## *3.5 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 Wwar: 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/10.1177/0021909603038002006*.
  - **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

# 4
# *Primary Lecture Series*

The primary lecture series seeks to answer the question "What makes a war a dirty war?" In order to answer this, we'll also implicitly be examining how and why certain forms of political violence get classed as wars, and why some forms of violence (repression) have an ambiguous relationship to war and armed conflict.

In a nutshell, my answer to the above question is that dirty wars, in the sense used in this course, involve the use of force by a state on a section of its citizens. Furthermore, they involve what I term as denial(s) of status, or standing. That is, one or more participants to a conflict consider their opponents unworthy of the protections usually afforded by citizenship, the rules of war, or the concept of human dignity. Secondly, these wars are perhaps better understood in terms of population control, both physical and psychological, rather than as duels between opposing forces.

The final element of the lecture series is to consider what we do by sub-categorising war and armed conflict. In this course, "dirty wars" are not presented as a stable sub-category of conflict, but rather as a way of thinking about war and political violence that reflects contemporary social attitudes to violence as much as it provides a way of evaluating conflicts in history.

## *4.1 Dirty Wars and Denials of Status*

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 lecture introduces a couple of important frames: 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.

This week's lecture also serves as an introduction to the course itself, notably the frame that we'll be using and examining over the first 11 weeks. 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 of their opponents.

The importance of this definition is where the *expectations* of status and standing come from. We'll discuss problems of objectivity and subjectivity, as well as where our baseline expectations may differ, and why.

- Discussion Questions:
  - What use is the concept of "dirty wars"?
  - Is the "War on Terror" a war? When did it start?
- Readings:
  - 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.
  - French, David. "Nasty not nice: British counter-insurgency doctrine and practice, 1945–1967." Small Wars & Insurgencies 23, no. 4–5 (2012): 744–761.
  - Barkawi, Tarak. "Decolonising War." European Journal of International Security 1, no. 2 (2016): 199–214.

## *4.2 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?[1] 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.

[1] 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."

- 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?
- Readings:
  - Schabas, William A. "Origins of the genocide convention: From Nuremberg to Paris." Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law 40 (2007): 35.
  - Van Schaack, Beth. "The Definition of Crimes Against Humanity: Resolving the Incoherence." Columbia Journal of Transnational Law 37 (1999): 787.

### *4.3 Regulating War and Warfare*

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.[2] 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.

[2] Notably proportionality calculations

An important question, therefore, is when is a war not a war? For the course, the important question is who (or what) gets to make such judgements, and why. To help answer this, we'll be covering the definition and criteria (or lack thereof) of war in a variety of disciplines (military theory, international law, ethics, social science). We'll use this to look at "small wars" and wars of empire in the 18th/19th/20th centuries to think about whether war can ever be defined in an objective sense. We'll look at how this features in debates about the changing character of war.[3]

[3] And also talk a bit about the people who get grumpy when someone says that the nature of war has changed/is changing

- Discussion Questions:
  - What theories explain the decision by participants to abide by a shared set of rules in war?
  - When, if ever, is the existence of war an objective fact?
- Readings:
  - Kaldor, Mary. New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era. 3rd ed. Polity Press, (2012). Chapter 2

  - Freedman, Lawrence. Strategy: A History. Oxford University Press, (2015). Chapter 7
  - Mary L. Dudziak, "Law, War, and the History of Time," California Law Review 98, no. 5 (2010): 1669-1710

### *4.4 Reasons for Restraint: Humanity and Human Rights*

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 Questions:
  - Do you agree more with Francis Lieber, or Henri Dunant? Why?
  - How should the law of armed conflict should interact with human rights law? Why?
- Readings:
  - Lubell, Noam. "Challenges in applying human rights law to armed conflict." International review of the Red Cross 87, no. 860 (2005): 737–754.
  - 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.
  - Abresch, William. "A human rights law of internal armed conflict: the European Court of Human Rights in Chechnya." European Journal of International Law 16, no. 4 (2005): 741–767.

### *4.5 Is Any War Clean? Sexual Violence in Conflict*

Most conflicts feature some form of sexual violence. In this class we'll cover the ongoing debates about defining sexual violence in conflict,

as well as theories that seek to explain its causes. For the most part, we will focus on some wider questions, notably 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 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 Questions:
  - Are "normal" acts of violence commensurable with sexual violence?
  - Which of the descriptive, causal, and normative issues associated with sexual violence in conflict do you find most troubling? Why?
- Readings:
  - Grossmann, Atina. "A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers." October 72 (1995): 43–63.
  - 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.
  - Gottschall, Jonathan. "Explaining wartime rape." Journal of sex research 41, no. 2 (2004): 129–136.

## *4.6 Treason, Political Community and Political Enemies*

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. In particular we'll be looking at the problem of political enmity involving a state's own citizens.

- Discussion Questions:
  - What, if anything, do you owe to your fellow citizens that you don't owe to people from another country?
  - Is revoking the citizenship of suspected terrorists an act of cowardice?
- Readings:
  - Osterhammel, Jürgen. The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century. Vol. 15. Princeton University Press, (2015). Chapter 8
  - Schmitt, Carl. "Theory of the Partisan: Intermediate Commentary on the Concept of the Political" (2007).
  - Hack, Karl. "Everyone lived in fear: Malaya and the British way of counter-insurgency." Small Wars & Insurgencies 23, no. 4–5 (2012a): 671–699.

## *4.7 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.[4] We will look at the tools of coercion that states use to control restive populations. This class primarily focuses upon physical 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.

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

- 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?

- Readings:
  - Ucko, David H. " 'The People are Revolting': An Anatomy of Authoritarian Counterinsurgency." Journal of Strategic Studies39, no. 1 (2016): 29–61.
  - 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.
  - McCollum, James K. "The CORDS Pacification Organization in Vietnam: A Civilian-Military Effort." Armed Forces & Society 10, no. 1 (1983): 105–122.

## *4.8 Political Warfare and Political Emergencies*

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.

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

## *4.9 Identity, Identification, and Intelligence Institutions*

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 Questions:
  - Is intelligence ethics a contradiction in terms?
  - Why would a government tolerate or use death squads?
- Readings:
  - Clutterbuck, Lindsay. "Countering Irish Republican Terrorism in Britain: Its Origin as a Police function." Terrorism and Political Violence 18, no. 1 (2006): 95–118.
  - 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.

## *4.10 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 nine 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?

- Readings:
  - 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
  - Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline, and Andrew Mumford. "Torture, Rights, Rules and Wars: Ireland to Iraq." International Relations 21, no. 1 (2007): 119–126.

### *4.11 Targeted Killing and One-Sided Violence*

The home stretch. You made it. Time to talk about my book (just kidding, sorta). Again, this lecture may seem misplaced, but it's here for a reason. We'll be wrapping up the lecture series by examining 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.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is there anything specific about the forms of killing found in "dirty wars"?
  - Is it more disturbing to intentionally kill people whose identities you know, or people you only know via their status?
- Readings:
  - Downes, Chris. " 'Targeted killings' in an age of terror: the legality of the Yemen strike." Journal of Conflict and Security Law 9, no. 2 (2004): 277–294.
  - McDonald, Jack. Enemies Known and Unknown: Targeted Killings in America's Transnational Wars. Oxford University Press, (2017). Chapter 7

# 5
# *Research Lecture Series: Counting The Dead*

The research lecture series is designed to complement the final evaluation for this module. In this lecture series, I will be explaining and guiding you through one of my research projects that relates to the course. However the point of the research lecture series is that you will be using a substantial portion of your time in class to discuss and debate your own research projects. Unlike lectures in the first term, we will be paying specific attention to the practicalities of designing and conducting a research project in each and every class. Roughly 50% of the readings for this section of the course will relate to research design and research methods.

The idea behind this lecture series is that you will bring to each class your own thoughts on the topic, related to the research project that you intend to follow. You do *not* have to fix your research project ahead of schedule, and you are free to change your project halfway through term. However, no matter how your idea for your own research project evolves, you should consider the question for the week's class in relation to your own research. In-class group discussions will involve you discussing each other's ideas, but please remember that the focus is upon constructive engagement with each other's work.

This year's research lectures analyse the debates over civilian casualties caused by the Global Coalition Against Daesh in Iraq and Syria. The first two lectures will explain the overall research project in tandem with discussions to enable you to design your own 5000 word research project. The subsequent eight lectures are designed to guide you through the topic, and to connect it to lectures in term 1. Each lecture/seminar session will include discussion designed to get you to reflect upon key problems and questions associated with the design of research projects.

Please note that your reading this term will be greatly alleviated if you read Neta C. Crawford's *Accountability for Killing* over the Christmas break. Mark a day or two off in your calendar, sit down, and read it.

## *5.1 The Big Picture: Accountability for Killing*

*Please take time to consider what you would like to do for your final assessment prior to attending this class.*

This lecture will introduce five of the general components for a successful research essay: Identifying a research area, identifying an interesting research problem, constructing a theoretical framework, posing an answerable research question, and considering the implications of your research. We will be covering one of these in detail each week. In this lecture, we will discuss different processes of identifying research areas.

This lecture also provides an outline of my own research project, namely, contemporary arguments about the duties of militaries to analyse the civilian deaths and collateral damage caused by their actions. I will walk you through the project and my paper, but the emphasis of the lecture will be about the process of identifying a research area. For that reason, we'll be discussing the wider issue of accountability for killing in armed conflict. This is an important area of contemporary research, work here often transcends disciplinary boundaries, and also segues into political campaigns aimed at righting what some perceive as injustices in the way contemporary warfare is waged. We will discuss ways of working from a topic of personal interest or contemporary policy problem to a research area that connects with existing academic research.

- Discussion Questions:
  - What makes an academic research project worth doing?
  - What role does silence play in contemporary debates about civilian casualties?
- Readings:
  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). Introduction and chapter 1
  - Aronson, Jay D. "The Politics of Civilian Casualty Counts." In *Counting Civilian Casualties: An Introduction to Recording and Estimating Nonmilitary Deaths in Conflict*, edited by Taylor B. Seybolt, Jay D. Aronson, and Baruch Fischhoff. Oxford University Press, (2013).
  - McDonald, Jack. "Rational Nescience or Strategic Ignorance? Epistemic Approaches to Civilian Casualty Reporting in Contemporary Conflicts." Working Paper, (2019a).

## *5.2 Research Problem: Arguing About Civilian Casualties in Iraq and Syria*

How do you go from an interesting area of research to an interesting research problem? In this lecture we'll discuss the identification of research gaps and research puzzles. This will guide the content of the lecture, which will cover the current debates about collateral damage in current operations in Iraq and Syria, as well as related academic research on epistemic duties, and data ethics in armed conflict. The lecture will finish with a discussion of how to approach a real-world problem (disagreements about the number of civilian casualties inflicted by various parties to the armed conflicts in Iraq and Syria) in an academic way, and how this approach differs from other types of research on the problem.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is your research descriptive, causal, or normative? Why? Why not?
  - To what extent are members of a military coalition responsible for the civilian casualties inflicted by their allies?
- Readings:
  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). Chapter 2, 3
  - One of:
    * Oakford, Samuel. *Credibility Gap – UK Civilian Harm Assessments for the Battles of Mosul and Raqqa*. Airwars, (2018). *https://airwars.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/UK-Inquiry-into-Mosul-and-Raqqa-2018.pdf*.
    * Woods, Chris. *Limited Accountability: A Transparency Audit of the Coalition Air War Against so-Called Islamic State*. Airwars, (2016). *https://airwars.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Airwars-report_Web-FINAL1.compressed.pdf*.

## *5.3 Theoretical Frame: Epistemic Approaches to War and Warfare*

We'll start this lecture by discussing what is meant by a theoretical framework, and how to figure out an appropriate research framework to tackle a given research problem. In this lecture I'll discuss a number of different ways in which the issue of measuring civilian casualties can be approached from an academic perspective, and how each would influence subsequent research questions, and research methods. We'll

be covering a range of different approaches to the topic, notably historical debates about the problem of measuring war deaths, and public health approaches to the measurement of excess mortality during armed conflict, and the notion of epistemic duties in normative theory. Alongside this, we'll look at the role of NGOs in the promotion of new standards for casualty reporting, and the politics of communicating war deaths.

- Discussion Questions:
  - What are the important theoretical commitments of your research?
  - How does the measurement of death shape our understanding of the nature of war?
- Readings:
  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). At least one of chapters 4, 5
  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). Chapter 6
  - Murray, C J L, G King, A D Lopez, N Tomijima, and E G Krug. "Armed Conflict as a Public Health Problem." *BMJ* 324, no. 7333 (2002): 346–49. *https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.324.7333.346*.

## *5.4 Research Question: Who Should Measure Which War Deaths, and How?*

In this lecture we will discuss the role that framing research questions and hypotheses plays in shaping subsequent work. An important element of this is scoping research questions so that they are answerable in a given wordcount. As such, we'll also discuss different kinds of academic research projects and outputs. As part of this, I'll continue talking you through my own research and explain how I adjusted the scope to fit an article-length research output. As part of this, we'll be looking at the how the twin general issues discussed last week (the measurement of war deaths and epistemic duties) can be combined to significantly narrow down the scope of inquiry. We will then look at the use of case studies as a means of testing or explaining theoretical issues. In this lecture we will therefore discuss underlying ideas about the epistemic duties of military organisations in terms of measuring the damage that they inflict in the course of operations.

- Discussion Questions:

  - What are the strongest counter-arguments to your preliminary research conclusions?
  - What duties to know exist in war?

- Readings:

  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). At least one of chapters 7,8
  - Crawford, Neta. *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars*. Oxford University Press, (2013). Chapter 9
  - DeNicola, Daniel R. *Understanding Ignorance: The Surprising Impact of What We Don't Know*. MIT Press, (2017). Chapter 7

## *5.5 Implications: The Changing Observability of Armed Conflict*

This lecture highlights three directions of future research from the same project. The point of the final lecture in this series is that it also provides each student some time to discuss how they see their own research fitting in with existing research, and how it could be taken forwards in radically different directions. This is an important thing to consider for longer research projects, and may help when it comes to your dissertation. In essence, after all is said and your analysis is done, how do you conclude a research project in a productive manner? At graduate level, it's not about saying "I'm right, because $x$, $y$, and $z$", it's about knowing your material so thoroughly that you are able to make constructive connections to wider research, or discern interesting pathways for future research.

The three things I will be talking about in this lecture are the strategic implications of automated and autonomous recognition systems, ethics and emerging technologies, and data ethics in armed conflict. My hope is that you will see how each of these could naturally flow from the project we have covered in this series.

- Discussion Questions:

  - How have your ideas for your research project evolved over this term?
  - What might be the negative consequences of "war in a goldfish bowl"?

- Readings:

  - One of:

* McDonald, Jack. "Data Ethics and Armed Conflict - Contemporary Problems Beyond the Just War Tradition" Working paper, (2019c).
* McDonald, Jack. "War and Privacy Rights." Working Paper, (2019b).

# 6
# *Research Lecture Series: Digital Repression*

This research series examines the concept of digital repression, that is, political repression as it intersects with the digital technologies and services that now sustain daily life worldwide.

The key case study for this whole series is the ongoing repression of Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang. This might seem like picking on one country, but Xinjiang is an important case study for a number of reasons. First, we can contrast the prior international outrage at Chinese repression in Tibet with the relatively muted response to Xinjiang. Second, Xinjiang in many ways represents the maturation of sets of technologies, such as recognition systems, that widen the state's capability to control a population. However third, and as important, is that we should guard against the narrative of novelty when it comes to the use of digital technologies for political repression. The artifacts and systems might be new, but the ultimate purpose and goal of repression might not have changed that much.

## *6.1 Technologies of Repression*

In this lecture we will revisit some of the themes found earlier in the course, but we will primarily be examining the concept of repression through the lens of technology. Ho and why does technology matter in the use of repression, or the avoidance of repression? In particular we will be looking at the role that information processing plays in political repression, as well as the definitions of surveillance technologies. In particular, we will look at technologies of identification, and the development of biometric identity and identification systems.

This lecture will also introduce the concept of digital repression, and run through some of the history of battles over freedom and privacy on the internet. We'll also be looking at the (connected) history of technology and surveillance, and some of the key technical/policy issues associated with the regulation of surveillance in an era where almost all communication relies upon, or is co-located with, digital

devices. Lastly, we will be looking at these issues in the context of China, and introducing the case study of Xinjiang.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Why is Xinjiang almost non-existent in the academic literature on surveillance studies?
  - What types of surveillance do you think constitute repression?
- Readings:
  - Breckenridge, Keith. *Biometric State*. Cambridge University Press, (2014). Chapter 1
  - Goede, Marieke de, and Gavin Sullivan. "The Politics of Security Lists." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 34, no. 1 (2016): 67–88. *https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775815599309*.
  - Agar, Jon. *The Government Machine: A Revolutionary History of the Computer*. MIT Press, (2003). Chapter 4
  - Pfaff, Steven. "The Limits of Coercive Surveillance." *Punishment & Society* 3, no. 3 (2001): 381–407. *https://doi.org/10.1177/146247450100300300*3.

## *6.2 The State/Platform/Copyright Nexus of Repression*

This lecture looks at a core value that is usually threatened by political repression, freedom of speech, and the role of censorship in political repression. We'll use censorship, in broad terms, as a way of thinking about the interactions between states and corporations in the digital age. We will look at the span of ideals and policy options associated with the regulation of published works and speech, and how the underlying technological base of the internet and digital platforms messes with this.[1]

The interesting feature of digital censorship is the degree to which it can be repurposed. In short, the technical and social systems that suppress child pornography on the internet can also be used to keep mention of the 1989 Beijing massacre from the internet in a given country. The lecture then look at key motivators for regulation and control built into digital platforms like YouTube created by law and policy. Here we will focus on copyright and content moderation as a key issue. We can, say, contrast the development of country-wide internet filters (they exist in the UK as well as China) with the development of private regimes of content moderation in response to pre-existing law.

[1] For example, do you "speak" through ICQ or other platforms like Facebook Messenger, or are you endlessly publishing?

- Discussion Questions:
  - Are hundred-million-user platforms an inherent threat to freedom of speech?

  - Should governments and corporations err on the side of over-censoring or under-censoring when seeking to eliminate terrorist propaganda from the internet?

- Readings:

  - Edwards, Lilian. "Pornography, Censorship and the Internet." In *Law and the Internet*, edited by Lilian Edwards and Charlotte Waelde, Third Ed. Hart Publishing, (2010).
  - Maréchal, Nathalie. "Networked Authoritarianism and the Geopolitics of Information: Understanding Russian Internet Policy." *Media and Communication* 5, no. 1 (2017). *https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v5i1.808*.

### *6.3 Technology Will Save Us… Right?*

This lecture covers responses to repression using digital technologies, and the idea of liberation technologies. We will be covering a range of ideas clustered around the notion that some technologies inherently preserve, or increase, political freedom, and criticisms of these ideas. In particular, we will be looking at political disputes about cryptography and the preservation of privacy. Going back to last week's lecture, we'll be looking at how libertarian ideas about cryptography clashed with state aims in the 1990s over the Clipper Chip and cryptography exports, and then looking to contemporary debates about the right of access by states and law enforcement agencies to information held on personal devices or company servers.

- Discussion Questions:

  - Why does the notion of "liberation technology" persist?
  - Should computer code be considered speech?

- Readings:

  - Glancy, Dorothy J. "The Invention of the Right to Privacy." *Arizona Law Review* 21 (1979).
  - Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, (1998). Chapter 3
  - Schulze, Matthias. "Clipper Meets Apple Vs. FBI—a Comparison of the Cryptography Discourses from 1993 and 2016." *Media and Communication* 5, no. 1 (2017). *https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v5i1.805*.

### *6.4 Exporting Repression*

This lecture will cover the international trade in digital surveillance technology, particularly the kind of stuff that can track (now somewhat ubiquitous) mobile phones, or access communications between

activists. In particular, we'll be looking at how and why states help other states out with surveillance technology. There are a couple of narratives at work. One is that China wants to make the world "safe for authoritarianism" and the other is that digital surveillance technology appears to be a growth export market for companies based in liberal democracies. One of the key fears is that authoritarian states armed with this kind of surveillance technology might ultimately check the social movements that challenge them. We will be looking at recent controversies in this area, and fundamentally asking how and why liberal democracies can justify the export of technologies to authoritarian and non-democratic regimes. We will be looking at export controls on arms and other kinds of restricted technologies involved in political repression to ask how and why digital surveillance technologies might fit.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Why do liberal democracies permit the export of surveillance technologies to authoritarian states?
  - Can you reconcile your opinion about the regulation of surveillance technology with your answer to last week's second discussion question?
- Readings:
  - Bohnenberger, Fabian. "The Proliferation of Cyber-Surveillance Technologies: Challenges and Prospects for Strengthened Export Controls." *Strategic Trade Review* 4 (2017): 81–102.
  - Parsons, Christopher, Adam Molnar, Jakub Dalek, Jeffrey Knockel, Miles Kenyon, Bennett Haselton, Cynthia Khoo, and Ronald Deibert. "The Predator in Your Pocket: A Multidisciplinary Assessment of the Stalkerware Application Industry," Citizenlab, (2019). Read chapters 1, 2 & 6

## *6.5 Digital Repression: What Is To Be Done?*

If you make it this far in the year, you will probably have guessed that I am something of a pessimist, or at least that I'm suspicious of utopian narratives. But that is not the same as stating that nothing will change, or can change. In this lecture we will be discussing practical and theoretical approaches to digital repression as a policy problem.[2] We will be revisiting the discussions over this series to debate the importance of the digital in "digital repression" and the best theoretical framing of some of the problems that we have encountered so far.

[2] It's still a policy problem if you're the person on the sharp end of the policy.

This lecture is going to put the original issue, internment camps in Xinjiang, back on centre stage. We'll be looking at it as a problem

from a variety of different angles, and in the context of China's competition with the United States. You'll be asked to bring to the lecture the insights you've gained from your studies so far this year, and we'll be discussing what are the most important theories that explain the existence of the camps, and how/why China might cease its repression in Xinjiang.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does any entity but the Communist Party of China have the power to shut down the internment camps in Xinjiang?
  - Is "technology ethics" a way of avoiding the politics of technology?
- Readings:
  - Tufekci, Zeynep. *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. Yale University Press, (2017). Chapter 9
  - Farrell, Henry, and Abraham L. Newman. "Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion." *International Security* 44, no. 1 (2019): 42–79. *https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00351* .

# 7
# *First Seminar Series: Reciprocity and Retribution*

The study of the morality/ethics of war takes three primary forms. Normative theorists discuss and seek to identify the morally permissible basis for the resort to war, and the use of force within war. Interlinked with this is the study of traditions of just war, a form of intellectual history that is closely entwined with work on just war theory. Lastly, there are a lot of people who study the ethics of war for the purposes of improving military professionalism.

We're going to be doing something a little different.

This year's seminar series centres upon the role of retribution in reciprocity. We typically find discussion of reciprocity in altruistic terms, whereas here we will focus primarily upon the reverse: reciprocity generated by the threat or fear of retribution. The actions and activities covered in this seminar series are, by and large, both illegal under current international law, as well as generally held to be immoral by just war theorists.

Why do this? Well, one reason is to question assumptions or narratives at the centre of just war theory itself. One assumption is that there are a minimal set of moral rules or ethical attitudes that appear in different cultures across history that govern the conduct of war. Just as most societies in most places have some set of rules against murder, the criteria of the just war tradition pop up all over the place. The problem is, notions of retribution are prevalent throughout history, both in theory and practice.

There are two key texts for this seminar, Helen Frowe's (2015) *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction* and Alec Walen's (2016) overview of *Retributive Justice*. The point at which we'll be focusing upon chapters in Frowe's book are indicated in the reading list, but it is a good idea to read both in full as soon as possible.

## *7.1 The Morality of Reciprocity*

In this session we will discuss the grounding of reciprocity in morality, that is, how do just war theorists explain the moral grounding of reciprocity and cooperation in war? Why, for example, do people take prisoners, or spare non-combatants? To ground the discussion, we will be discussing the classic example of Henry V's order to kill French prisoners taken during the battle of Agincourt. In particular, we will discuss the difference between the contemporaneous reasons to take prisoners, and the way in which we understand the obligation to take prisoners in the present.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does what we call 'reciprocity' rely upon shared agreement, or individual obligation?
  - How should we judge Henry V's order to kill prisoners at Agincourt?
- Readings:
  - Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars*. Basic Books, (2015). Chapter 1
  - 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*.

## *7.2 Reciprocity and Retribution*

Contemporary attitudes towards justice in war are conditioned by the centrality of self-defence in analyses of everything from inter-personal violence to international armed conflict. Most moral theories make space for the use of violence to defend oneself, or innocents,[1] and individual or collective self-defence is one of the sole reasons for states to use force under international law.[2] And yet opinions about retaliatory violence are often far broader than that acceptable to academic discussion. In this seminar we will discuss the ethics of retaliation and punishment. Is it always wrong? Can the threat of punishment-in-kind ever be good? What, if any, classes of retaliation might we excuse? We'll look at this in practical terms via the examination of nuclear deterrence, and the arguments of those who consider the "right" thing to do in some circumstances is to threaten population centres with annihilation.

[1] Though not all, see pacifism

[2] Look it up in the UN Charter

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is cooperation possible without the possibility of retribution or punishment?

  - Do objections to retributive justice make sense in war?

- Readings:

  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapter 1
  - Walen, Alec. "Retributive Justice." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Winter (2016). *https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/justice-retributive/*; Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2016.
  - Greene, Joshua David. *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap Between Us and Them.* Penguin, (2014). Chapter 2

## *7.3 Solving The Tragedy of Common Sense Morality With Violence*

Here we address a key problem that just war theory attempts to solve: how can communities with differing, or even incompatible, sets of moral values co-operate? We'll discuss Joshua Greene's suggestion that deep pragmatism might provide a basis for inter-social morality, and compare it to arguments about the relationship between war and self defence found in Helen Frowe's book.

- Discussion Questions:

  - Is just war theory a description of an unstable metamorality or something else?
  - Can the ethics of self defence be completely separated from retribution?

- Readings:

  - Greene, Joshua David. *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap Between Us and Them.* Penguin, (2014). Chapter 9
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapter 2

## *7.4 Retaliation: Justice as Evenness*

This week we will be looking at the idea of retribution as a cause of war.[3] William Miller's examination of the role the punishment plays in producing social cohesion.

[3] More precisely, why retributive talk is usually excluded from discussions about just cause

- Discussion Questions:

  - Is a war for retribution more, or less, justifiable than a war for deterrence? Why?

  - Why does the relationship between power and uncertainty differ in *Lex Talionis* and Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice*?

- Readings:
  - Fricker, Miranda. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford University Press, (2007). Chapter 7
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction*. Routledge, (2015). Chapter 3
  - Miller, William Ian. *Eye for an Eye*. Cambridge University Press, (2005). Chapter 2

## *7.5 What Punishment is Due?*

Contemporary discussions of justice in war tend to skip over the fact of perceived unevenness, or inequality, between persons both in the past and present. It allows us to miss, almost entirely, the role that slavery and enslavement played in many conflicts over history. In this class we'll be discussing a rather interesting case: the post-conflict slaughter of Europeans in Haiti during the war for independence.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does retribution differ from revenge in both theory and practice?
  - What do former slaves owe to those who might re-enslave them?

- Readings:
  - Girard, Philippe R. "Caribbean Genocide: Racial War in Haiti, 1802–4." *Patterns of Prejudice* 39, no. 2 (2005): 138–61. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220500106196*.
  - The Haitian Declaration of Independence, available here
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction*. Routledge, (2015). Chapter 4

## *7.6 Should Leaders Be Spared?*

Just war theory is odd, in the sense that it can authorise the resort to war that kills hundred of thousands of people, but things like, say, murdering a bellicose political leader in their sleep to avert a conflict is definitely prohibited. In this seminar we'll discuss the asymmetries of punishment inherent in morality of war. Why is it, for example, that the politicians who take a country to war are non-permissible targets, yet those who serve in the military, and have no say in the resort to war, usually are? At face value, this asymmetry seems fundamentally unfair, but could such asymmetry promote cooperation between competing political elites? Or prevent the escalation of conflicts? As part of this seminar, we'll discuss 'leadership decapitation' and the different framings of killing terrorist leaders, and Heads of State.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does anyone deserve to die in war?
  - Should political leaders be permissible targets?
- Readings:
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapters 5 & 6
  - Wingfield, Thomas C. "Taking Aim at Regime Elites: Assassination, Tyrannicide, and the Clancy Doctrine." *Maryland Journal of International Law & Trade* 22 (1998): 287–317.

## *7.7 Sherman's March to the Sea*

A key disagreement between traditionalist and revisionist theories of just war is whether protection for non-combatants should be absolute, or whether some classes of non-combatants are liable to attack for enabling the continuation of war. I think a key area of interest in this regard is the difference between the notion of "liability to attack" and "spared from punishment".[4] In this seminar we will discuss this difference, and how to frame Sherman's decision during the American Civil War to lay waste to large tracts of the South in order to speed the end of the war.

[4] NB: This is not the usual framing of this in just war theory!

- Discussion Questions:
  - Which account of non-combatant immunity, if any, do you think is right? Why?
  - Was Sherman's march to the sea an act of retribution or necessity?
- Readings:
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapters 7 & 8
  - Neely, Mark E. "Was the Civil War a Total War?" *Civil War History* 37, no. 1 (1991): 5–28. *https://doi.org/10.1353/cwh.1991.0017*.

## *7.8 Reprisals*

Reprisals, or the killing of civilians and prisoners of war, are now expressly forbidden, but for a long time they served as an important deterrent to breaking the rules of war. In this seminar, we'll discuss the justifications for reprisals that have been offered, and the degree to which those justifications no longer hold true. We'll also discuss a principle problem faced by contemporary commanders - how can one persuade an opponent to abide by the rules of war during a conflict when one lacks any lawful means of inflicting punishment?

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is there ever a justification for retribution against prisoners of war?
  - How does just war theory account for the fact that prisoners of war are "mutual hostages"?
- Readings:
  - 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*.
  - Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory: An Introduction*. Second Ed. Rowman & Littlefield, (2013). Chapter 4
  - Zarusky, Jürgen. " 'That Is Not the American Way of Fighting:' The Shooting of Captured SS-Men During the Liberation of Dachau." In *Dachau and the Nazi Terror II: 1933–1945 Studies and Reports*, edited by Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, 133–60. Dachau, (2002).

## *7.9 Revenge*

The possibility of revenge opens up the prospect of inevitable punishment or harm over time, even across generations. In this seminar we'll address the temporal scope of punishment, and how this might help or hinder attempts to generate cooperation. In particular, we'll likely discuss feuds, and cultures that feature feuding as an accepted, or required, practice. The case study for this week will be Israel's targeting of members of Black September after their execution of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is the utility of revenge a contradiction in terms?
  - Are Israel's operations against Black September after the Munich Olympics best classed as revenge, retribution, or self-defence? Why?
- Readings:
  - Bergman, Ronen. *Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations*. Random House, (2018). Chapter 10
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction*. Routledge, (2015). Chapter 9

## *7.10 Do ISIS Deserve Quarter?*

In this seminar we will look at an extreme case - ISIS's conduct against civilians in Iraq and Syria - and the question of mercy. Given an opponent that is happy to slaughter, rape, and enslave civilians, alongside committing genocide and a host of other war crimes/crimes against humanity, do they deserve mercy, if so, why? We will be looking at how virtue ethics might provide an answer to these questions.

- Discussion Questions:
  - What use is virtue ethics to just war theory?
  - Do ISIS fighters deserve mercy? What of their support networks?
- Readings:
  - Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory: An Introduction.* Second Ed. Rowman & Littlefield, (2013). Chapter 10
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapter 10

## *7.11 Justice and Escalation*

In this last seminar in the series, we'll discuss a wider issue with the morality of war, namely the propensity of morals and justice to exacerbate conflict rather than limit or constrain it. After all, one of the key criticisms of retribution is not only that it is wrong in and of itself, but that it is also counter-productive. We will therefore finish off the seminar series by looking at the relationship between morality and the escalation of conflicts.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does generalist morality lead us into holy wars?
  - What are the best criticisms of retributive ethics?
- Readings:
  - Geis, Anna, and Carmen Wunderlich. "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Comparing the Notions of 'Rogue' and 'Evil' in International Politics." *International Politics* 51, no. 4 (2014): 458–74. *https://doi.org/10.1057/ip.2014.19.*
  - Frowe, Helen. *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction.* Routledge, (2015). Chapter 12
  - Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory: An Introduction.* Second Ed. Rowman & Littlefield, (2013). Chapter 11

# 8
# *Second Seminar Series: Coercion and Contemporary COIN*

The second seminar series examines the inclusion and exclusion of normative evaluations of military strategy and operational practice. In this seminar series we will examine the relationship between counterinsurgency (COIN) and political repression in theory and practice. In particular, the series will examine how contemporary COIN as practiced by liberal democracies often shies away from explicit engagement with the repressive elements of COIN practice. You should read Austin Long's (2016) *The Soul of Armies: Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Military Culture in the US and UK* over the Christmas break, but otherwise no reading beyond these readings is required for the seminar series.

The idea of this seminar is to focus upon the variable of government type, and the way in which categories of government and governance are constructed. This allows for a deeper interrogation of one of the underlying themes of the module: What, if anything, separates liberal democracies from non-democratic governments in the prosecution of internal conflicts? Over the course of the seminar we will be examining the differences between liberal counterinsurgency and authoritarian counterinsurgency, as well as substantial areas of similarity.

## *8.1 Best Practice in COIN*

Both war and political repression are part-constituted by the existence of political differences. Normative values therefore play a significant role in both, yet the evaluation of military practice often seeks to identify instrumental utility rather than engage with wider normative issues. In this seminar, we'll discuss whether the identification of best practices - evaluating military campaigns to identify patterns of success and utility - can ever be a value-free activity.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Does the search for "best practice" in COIN require us to ignore political values in individual cases?
  - Is identifying "best practice" in COIN a value-neutral activity?
- Readings:
  - Paul, Christopher, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, and Molly Dunigan. *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies*. RAND Corporation, (2013b).[1]
  - Sepp, Kalev I. "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency." *Military Review* 135, nos. 3, May-June (2005).

[1] You can also find the detailed case studies in Paul, Christopher, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, and Molly Dunigan. *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies*. RAND Corporation, (2013a).

## *8.2 The Classification of COIN*

As you'll know from the main course, a key problem in the study of conflict is construction of categories and sub-categories. In this seminar we will look at a particular categorisation problem, which is distinguishing counterinsurgency campaigns from civil wars. Is this even possible? When we identify something as a counterinsurgency campaign, are we talking about a conflict, a strategy, or something else?

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is there a meaningful difference between counterinsurgency and civil war?
  - How might the biases identified by Kalyvas influence the way COIN is analysed?
- Readings:
  - Kilcullen, David. "Counter-Insurgency Redux." *Survival* 48, no. 4 (2006): 111–30. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330601062790*.
  - Kalyvas, Stathis N. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press, (2006). Chapter 2
  - Jones, David Martin, M. L.R. Smith, and John Stone. "Counter-Coin: Counterinsurgency and the Preemption of Strategy." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 35, no. 9 (2012): 597–617. *https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2012.702668*.

## *8.3 Success and Failure in COIN*

This seminar examines the inherent biases found in the kind of questions we ask about insurgency and counterinsurgency. In particular, if we seek to measure an agent's success or failure, how much does the selection of the agent frame our subsequent investigation? We'll be

discussing the analysis of the success/failure of both insurgents and incumbent political authorities.

- Discussion Questions:
  - How does the explanation of insurgent success differ from the explanation of counterinsurgent failure?
  - Is it possible to arrive at objective standards of success and failure in internal conflict?
- Readings:
  - 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*.
  - MacDonald, Paul K. " 'Retribution Must Succeed Rebellion': The Colonial Origins of Counterinsurgency Failure." *International Organization* 67, no. 2 (2013): 253–86. *https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818313000027*.

## *8.4 COIN's Imperial Hangover*

As outlined in the main lecture series, the ideas and techniques of contemporary COIN have strong ties to the pacification and policing of European empires. Needless to say, these ties are controversial. Nonetheless, contemporary COIN differs in some marked respects, but some argue that the colonial aspect of COIN is inherent to the practice, no matter how much contemporary democracies might seek to distance themselves from past empires. In this seminar, we'll discuss this issue, in particular whether bracketing out the political dimensions of colonialism from discussions of COIN is itself a political issue.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is it right to evaluate contemporary COIN theory without considering its colonial origins?
  - Is COIN an inherently repressive practice?
- Readings:
  - Barkawi, Tarak. "Decolonising War." *European Journal of International Security* 1, no. 2 (2016): 199–214.
  - Mockaitis, Thomas R. "The Origins of British Counter-insurgency." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 1, no. 3 (1990): 209–25. *https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319008422956*.

## *8.5 Authoritarian COIN*

Contemporary debates about the nature of COIN, and best practices, have given rise to both criticisms and counterpoints. A key counterpoint is the identification of "Authoritarian COIN" by researchers

who note that some non-democratic states are markedly successful at COIN, using methods that liberal democratic states consider to be counterproductive or profoundly wrong. In this seminar we will examine some key works on this topic and discuss whether authoritarian COIN exists as a model/framework, or perhaps counts as something else.

- Discussion Questions:
  - How do Byman and Ucko differ in their evaluation of authoritarian COIN?
  - Does an "authoritarian model" of COIN exist?
- Readings:
  - Ucko, David H. " 'The People Are Revolting': An Anatomy of Authoritarian Counterinsurgency." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 1 (2016): 29–61. *https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2015.1094390.*
  - Byman, Daniel. " 'Death Solves All Problems': The Authoritarian Model of Counterinsurgency." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 1 (2016): 62–93. *https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2015.1068166.*
  - Schmidt, Manfred G. "Regime Types: Measuring Democracy and Autocracy." In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Political Science*, edited by Hans Keman and Jaap J. Woldendorp, 111. Edward Elgar, (2016).

## *8.6 The Minimum Force Myth*

Narratives of success and failure play a significant role in the construction of COIN, and evaluation of best practice. In this seminar we will look at a key narrative, that of "minimum force", which some consider to typify the British approach to COIN. Despite the fact that this narrative faced significant challenge from historians both before and after 9/11, it still persists. Here, we'll discuss the importance of this narrative in terms of the way it legitimises COIN practices.

- Discussion Questions:
  - How does the notion of "minimum force" legitimise COIN practice?
  - What explains the persistence of minimum force as a perceived principle of British COIN?
- Readings:
  - Mockaitis, Thomas R. "Low-Intensity Conflict: The British Experience." *Journal of Conflict Studies* 13, no. 1 (1993). *https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/15092.*
  - Strachan, Hew. "British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq." *The RUSI Journal* 152, no. 6 (2007): 8–11. *https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840701863018.*

  - French, David. "Nasty Not Nice: British Counter-Insurgency Doctrine and Practice, 1945–1967." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 23, nos. 4-5 (2012): 744–61.

### *8.7 Minimum Force in Iraq*

Continuing from last week's seminar, the narrative of British success in COIN - and reasons for success rooted in minimum force - played a significant part in the framing of COIN during the Iraq War. In the early phases of the conflict, it was sometimes reduced to the idea that the British could "do" COIN, and that the American military could learn from their past examples. In this seminar we'll look at the narrative of minimum force as it played out in the early phases of the Iraq War.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Did the US adopt British COIN practice, or an imagined version?
  - Given the apparent superiority of British COIN, why did they fail in Iraq?
- Readings:
  - Chin, Warren. "Examining the Application of British Counterinsurgency Doctrine by the American Army in Iraq." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 18, no. 1 (2007): 1–26. *https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310601173204*.
  - Aylwin-Foster, Nigel R.F. "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations." *Military Review* 135, nos. 6, November-December (2005).

### *8.8 Mobilising Malaya in FM3-24*

In this seminar we will zero in on the use of Malaya as an example of good COIN practice, notably the way in which the narrative was actually framed in doctrine. It is important to remember that the wider narratives under discussion in previous seminars don't always filter through to actual doctrine.[2] Nonetheless, examining how and why specific examples of COIN practice are used in doctrine provides a way to frame discussion about the use of history in doctrine itself.

[2] For a good example of this, see Etzioni (2015) and the reply from John Nagl (2015).

- Discussion Questions:
  - What is the importance of FM 3-24's (2006) mis-reading of the case study of Malaya?
  - Why does FM 3-24 emphasise legitimacy over population control?

- Readings:
  - Hack, Karl. "Using and Abusing the Past: The Malayan Emergency as Counterinsurgency Paradigm." In *The British Approach to Counterinsurgency: From Malaya and Northern Ireland to Iraq and Afghanistan*, edited by Paul Dixon, 207–42. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, (2012b). *https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137284686_7*.
  - Petraeus, David H., James F. Amos, and John A. Nagl. *FM3-24 Counterinsurgency*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press, (2007). Chapter 1, Section 6-104 to 6-106 Available online here

## *8.9 The Absence of Kenya*

Malaya is often referred to as an archetype of COIN success. However British forces were also successful in a number of other campaigns, notably the suppression of the Mau-Mau revolt in Kenya. However the means and methods of that campaign fly in the face of narratives about restraint as a key element of COIN success. In this seminar we'll be looking at this is in a wider sense, which is the strange way in which coercion and violence are framed in FM 3-24. Why does it give the impression that coercive force is employed by only one side in a COIN campaign?

- Discussion Questions:
  - What explains FM 3-24's asymmetric analysis of the role of coercion in COIN?
  - What theories explain the silence in contemporary COIN theory regarding the role of exemplary force in COIN?
- Readings:
  - Bennett, Huw. "The Other Side of the Coin: Minimum and Exemplary Force in British Army Counterinsurgency in Kenya." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 18, no. 4 (2007): 638–64. *https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310701778514*.
  - Branch, Daniel. "Footprints in the Sand: British Colonial Counterinsurgency and the War in Iraq." *Politics & Society* 38, no. 1 (2010): 15–34. *https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329209357882*.
  - Petraeus, David H., James F. Amos, and John A. Nagl. *FM3-24 Counterinsurgency*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press, (2007). Search the document for "coercion" and "coercive" Available online here

## *8.10 COIN and Political Repression*

In this final seminar, we'll round off discussion of COIN by returning to the themes of the main lecture series. Contemporary COIN operations have been criticised by both military professionals as well as

academics, who often arrive at similar criticisms from quite different starting points. We'll discuss whether political repression is inherent in COIN, and whether strategic goals like "nation building" can ever succeed without political repression. Lastly, we'll alse spend some time reflecting on what we have learned over the course.

- Discussion Questions:
  - Is COIN an inherently repressive activity?
  - What have you encountered on this course that has changed your mind?
- Readings:
  - Gentile, Gian. "The Conceit of American Counter-Insurgency." In *The New Counter-Insurgency Era in Critical Perspective*, edited by Celeste Ward Gventer, David Martin Jones, and M. L. R. Smith, 240–56. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, (2014). *https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137336941_13*.
  - Davenport, Christian. "State Repression and Political Order." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10, no. 1 (2007a): 1–23. *https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.10.101405.143216*.

# 9
# *Skills Development*

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

## *9.1 A Roadmap for Skills Development*

The first term is designed to take someone who has not written a mid-length (2500 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 core transferrable research skills. The second term enables students to build upon these core skills to produce a 5000 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,[1] 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.

[1] 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.

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.[2] 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.

[2] 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

## *9.2 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:
  - Read an academic article
  - Read a research monograph[3]
  - Performed a literature search[4]
  - Written an article review, or book review
  - Written a literature review
  - Written a short academic essay[5]
  - Written a mid-length academic essay[6]
  - Written a dissertation[7]
  - Researched and delivered a non-academic research product
  - Produced a basic piece of collaborative research[8]
  - Produced a substantial piece of collaborative research[9]
  - Designed a substantial piece of collaborative research[10]
- What research skills are you seeking to improve as a priority?
- How would you rate your knowledge and understanding of the following concepts:[11]
  - War
  - Security
  - Strategy
  - Surveillance
  - Justice
  - Ethics
  - Repression

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

[4] A focused trawl through available academic literature and data to identify relevant material

[5] Upto 3000 words

[6] 5000-7000 words

[7] 10,000 - 15,000 words of academic writing

[8] Something equivalent to a 10 minute powerpoint presentation on a set topic/question

[9] As above, yet more work involved

[10] As above, except you were involved in selecting the research question/topic

[11] 1-2 lines for each

  - Insurgency
  - Terrorism
  - State terrorism
- What elements of the module interest you the most?

## *9.3 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

## *9.4 Iteration*

The basic academic workflow is repetition. We do something, think "Hmmm" and then do it again.[12] 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:

[12] Hopefully we think more than "Hmmm" but you get the drift

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

## *9.5 Building and Reducing an Argument*

In the real world of academia,[13] 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,[14] short review,[15] abstract,[16] or sales pitch.[17] For this reason, my suggested workflow for developing your argument/answer,[18] is that you explain your answer in a paragraph[19], 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 5000 word research essay will require your answer to be answered in a small number of sections,[20], each of which contain their own argument, which can be written out 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.[21]

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.

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

[14] The kind you get in the *New York Review of Books*

[15] The kind you will get in the book reviews section of journals

[16] Often the publisher's description of the book

[17] Alternately, the review you get from colleagues - "Have you read Professor Doe's latest book? It's about…"

[18] 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.

[19] 250 words

[20] 2-3 maximum

[21] 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).

Reducing an argument: Find a journal article, read it,[22], 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.[23]

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.[24]

[22] You don't have to take notes, and feel free to skim

[23] 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

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

## *9.6 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 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 ancilliary 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 ancilliary 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 alloted 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.

## *9.7 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.[25]

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 5000 words in length, I advise that you make your argument over at 12+ paragraphs. Try to keep paragraph length consistent. Each paragraph should consist of a point requried to make your argument, and a

[25] 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.

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 5000 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 usu-

ally 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 it 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.

## *9.8 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 schedule[26] and work on your feedback.

[26] 1-2 hours per assessment

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.[27]

[27] 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.

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.

## *9.9 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 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.

# *10*
# *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 (2500 words, 33%), and a research essay answering a question that you define (5000 words, 67%). I have to sign off on each research essay title to make sure it's something related to the course.[1]

[1] You will be expected to have a topic in mind by January 2020, and should be able to have a precise research question by the end of January 2020

Why this assessment pattern? Why not two essays? How come I'm not allowed to pick my essay title for the second essay? 5000 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 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.

## *10.1 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 2500 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.[2] 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.

[2] Here are some good examples of this:@@

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,[3] and Y = a case study (conflict)[4] or an element of a case study (important event/debate),[5] or disciplinary tool (ticking time bomb scenario, key theoretical discussion relevant to the course).

[3] Historians, strategists, political theorists, etc.

[4] 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.

[5] 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.

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.[6] 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.

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

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.

## *10.2 Research Essay*

If the prospect of a 5000 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 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 $y$?'3 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.[7]

[7] Gustafsson and Hagström (2018)

However a good research puzzle might not be answerable. This is a big problem for a 5000 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.[8] Horowitz had a great pice 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 5000 words) attempting to explain a new body of theory and apply it to a new case

[8] His twitter handle is mchorowitz

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 5000 words successful examples are pretty much figments of the imagination.

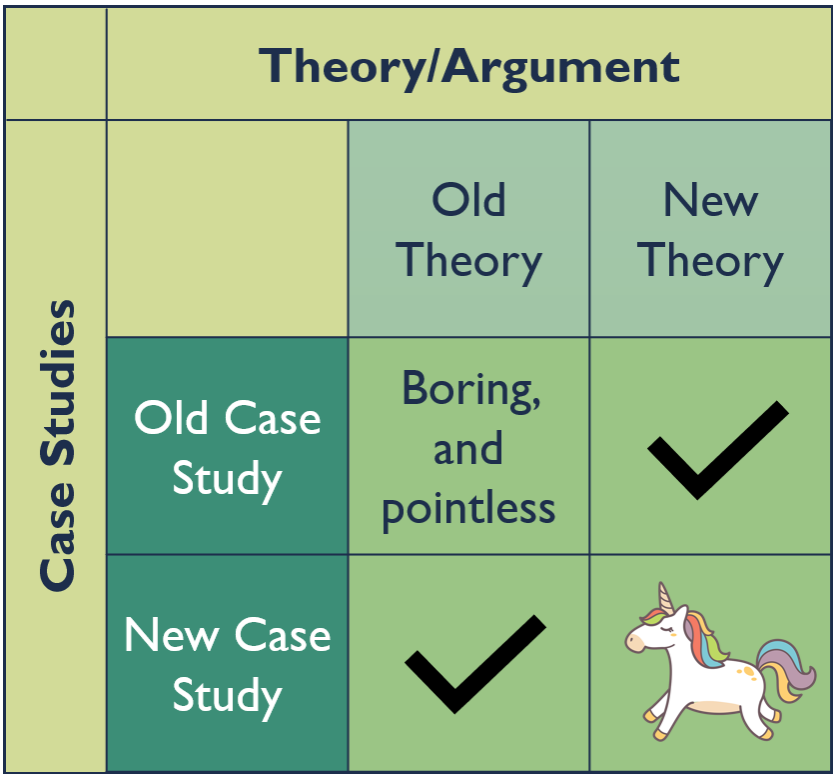


Figure 10.1: What about examples? Well, for the top left (old/old), this might be trying to evaluate whether classical or neoclassical realism best explains the origins of World War 1. For the top right (old case/new theory) this might be using emerging theories of ontological security to explain the 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 5000 words.

Where a 5000 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 5000 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 5000 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 5000 words without substantial original research. To navigate this, let us turn to Greek mythology.[9]

[9] Bet you weren't expecting that line.

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 5000 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?

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 5000 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 military[10] and a single mechanism (How did doctrine - and the ideas embdedded 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:

[10] Okay, still a sprawling set of institutions, but you get the drift

> 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 5000 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.

# 11
# Group Projects

Group projects are a core element of the course, but they are not part of your formal assessment. The group projects are 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 - it is calibrated to be too much for an individual, but easily manageable for a small group. You will be assigned a group by me. The projects will be organised on a OneNote notebook, which you will get access to at the start of term.

## 11.1 Using OneNote

OneNote is a Microsoft product that is selected for ease of use. If you have used Microsoft Word, then the general layout of the software should be familiar to you. The notebook will be accessible if you log into your KCL email through the web portal, and then select OneNote from the options pane.

The notebook will be laid out, so you don't have to do any page creation/layout. However, there are some ground rules:

- For clarity, use Harvard referencing where needed. So "The cat sat on the mat (Doe, 2013, 3)" or similar.[1]
- Don't edit other people's work without permission.
- I'll ask you to nominate one person in your group to be the person I contact with questions.

[1] The KCL library offers referencing guides here `https://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/reference/KingsHarvardV1`

## 11.2 Aims

Why do this? There are three reasons that I have included this activity in the course (and like activities in other courses that I convene). First is that this activity enables you to practice and develop team-working skills. Second, this activity is designed so that you perform a related piece of group research prior to your assessment. The literature search precedes the literature review, and the case study precedes your

essay. Lastly, this activity is intended to get you to think about the possibilities inherent in open and collaborative research efforts.

## *11.3 Group Research Projects Timeline*

All students will do projects 1 (literature search) & 2 (case study) in term 1.

This is the summary timeline (it may be tweaked slightly):

- Week 2: Groups assigned for Literature Search Project
- Week 6: Deadline for literature search, groups assigned for Case Study Project
- Week 11: Deadline for case study

## *11.4 Literature Search*

There are 11 lectures that make up the main lecture series. For this group research project, you will be tasked with performing a literature search on one of the lecture topics. The idea here is that as a group, you should be able to identify from reading the key works in a given field much easier than you ever could as an individual.

The goal of this project is a functional output. It is designed to be something of use to your fellow students. Note that since other groups will be working on separate projects, you will be able to benefit from their work.

For a minimum of expected output:

- 30+ key works on the topic, including
  - 2-4 key readings for introduction to the topic (not including those on the reading list)
  - 2 works per case study
  - 2 works connecting the topic to war/warfare, political repression, strategic studies, security studies, normative theory

There will be a page on the OneNote project for you to put the material up. There will also be space beneath it to paste the references in bibtex format. This will allow me (once all the projects are done) to make you a professional-loooking extended reading guide built by yourselves.

## *11.5 Develop a Case Study*

Use the case studies in this handbook as a model, and develop your own as a group. I will be making sure that there are no overlaps between groups so that this exercise is of maximum benefit to everyone.

Again, the idea of this project is that you are able to work together to perform a task that would be too much for any single person to undertake, so a mix of group and independent work will be necessary to produce your output.

The goal of this project is a functional output. It is designed to be something of use to your fellow students. Note that since other groups will be working on separate projects, you will be able to benefit from their work.

For a minimum of expected output:

- 30+ key works on the topic, including
  - 2-4 key readings for introduction to the topic (not including those on the reading list)
  - 2 works per class theme
  - Further reading material (Big books and interesting resources that you find)

There will be a page on the OneNote project for you to put the material up. There will also be space beneath it to paste the references in bibtex format. This will allow me (once all the projects are done) to make you a professional-loooking extended reading guide built by yourselves.

# *12*
# *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.

## *12.1 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.[1]

[1] This means no filling envelopes, no fetching coffees, or any other drudgework associated with internships.

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.

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, collab-

oration technologies, and whole-cohort research projects alongside more standard elements like drafting and editing your prior academic work to suit different audiences.

- Research projects. A fundamental aim of the lab is to enable groups to experiment with research projects[2] 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.

[2] Ones that do not require research ethics approval.

For the 2019/20 teaching year, this means:

- A distributed research project durings terms 1 and 2. This involves learning to use a handful of digital technologies (Markdown, Git/Github, Bibtex) and using them to produce a research bibliography. The focus for this year will be conflict, strategy, and climate change.
- A research communication workshop in term 3[3]

[3] This will be a 2 hour session focused upon transforming your work into viable articles, blogposts, etc, with a view to seeking publication

## *12.2 Strategy and Climate Change Research project*

The purpose of this project is to experiment with distributed and remote project work. That is, the primary goal is to develop ways of working together at distance, at scale, and using data formats that maximise the utility of research outputs for other researchers.

The topic is strategy and climate change. This means we will be potentially looking at three different types of literature:

- 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
- Literature on the diplomacy of climate change, and examining it for insights drawn from, or contradicted by, existing work on grand strategy

If you are interested in working on any of those three subtopics in particular, get in touch. Equally, if you just want to learn some new skills and build up your CV, get in touch.

In theory, the schedule for 2019-20 looks something like this:

- October: Get together for a first meeting, sort out tools we will use for research projects, training projects with tools, participants select projects they want to work on.
- November: Initial literature search and scoping meetings.
- December/January/February: Build project bibliographies, meet to discuss progress each month.
- March: Meet to discuss interesting ideas, identify literature gaps.
- April: Workshop to prototype potential research projects/datasets.
- May: Writing and research communication workshop.

In short, there will be a meeting once every 3 weeks or so where we'll discuss interesting stuff about strategy and climate change.

# *13*
# *Bibliography*


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