

THE CAUSES OF WAR

POLSCI 3Q03

Spring 2022

Instructor: Suneth Wijeratne
Email: wijeratp@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Mon & Wed 6:30 – 9:30 pm
Room: PGCLL B131

Office: KTH 505
Office Hours: Mon & Wed 10 - 11 am
or by appointment

Contents

Course Description.....	3
Course Objectives.....	3
Required Materials and Texts	3
Class Format.....	5
Course Evaluation – Overview	5
Course Evaluation – Details.....	5
Think Piece (25%), due in A2L on Tuesday, May 17 at 11:59 pm.....	5
Analytical Paper (40%), due in A2L on Tuesday, June 7 at 11:59 pm.....	5
Final Exam (35%), In-class on June 15, 2022, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm	6
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings	6
Week 1 (May 2 & 4, 2022) Introduction to the course and overview of theories of war and conditions of peace.....	6
Week 2 (May 9 & 11, 2022) Realist and Feminist approaches to the study of war and peace.....	6
Week 3 (May 16 & 18, 2022) Liberal and Postcolonial approaches to the study of war and peace.....	7
Week 4 (May 23 & 25, 2022) Popular representations of war	7
Week 5 (May 30 & June 1, 2022) International Politics, war and peace - I.....	8
Week 6 (June 6 & 8, 2022) International Politics, war and peace - II.....	8
Week 7 (June 13 & 15, 2022) Course wrap up and final exam.....	9
Course Policies	9
Submission of Assignments.....	9
Grades.....	9
Late Assignments	10
Absences, Missed Work, Illness	10
Courses with An On-Line Element.....	10

Online Proctoring	10
Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection	10
Copyright and Recording	11
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)	11
Academic Integrity Statement.....	11
Conduct Expectations.....	12
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	12
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy	12
Course Modification	12
Extreme Circumstances.....	13

Course Description

This course examines the causes of war from International Relations perspectives. It includes explorations of both traditional and critical theoretical perspectives on the causes of war and the conditions for peace. The course will examine how traditional theories, including Realism, Liberalism, and other positivist approaches, explain war and possible solutions to it while also examining more critical approaches, including Feminist and Postcolonial theories to war and conditions for peace. This course also engages in important contemporary discussions around Indigenous Nations, children, nuclear arms, and lethal autonomous weapons.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Have a broad understanding of the various traditional and critical International Relations approaches to the study of war and the conditions of peace.
- Identify insights and criticize diverse International Relations theories and approaches to explaining and understanding war.
- Recognize and identify the political framings of popular explanations and understandings of war.
- Appreciate new critical research areas that illuminate our understandings of war.
- Have developed critical research abilities and insights through analytical writing and research papers.

Required Materials and Texts

There is no textbook for this course. All required readings are posted on the course A2L site or are accessible through the McMaster University Library (<https://library.mcmaster.ca/>).

Students must view one movie from the following selection, which will be used as a case study for their Analytical Paper (see details in the Course Evaluation section). Most movies listed below are available through the McMaster University Library. However, some movies included in the list are available only through commercial subscription-based streaming services.

Students are, therefore, encouraged to shortlist 2-3 movie preferences before making their final movie selection. This will enable students to select a freely available movie, either via the McMaster University Library (<https://library.mcmaster.ca/>) or commercial streaming services to which they already have a subscription. Students should not need to make new purchases or rent movies for this assignment since an extensive list is provided below.

- 1898, Our Last Men in the Philippines (2016, directed by Salvador Calvo)

- All is quiet in the Western Front (1930, directed by Lewis Milestone)
- All quiet on the western front (1979, directed by Delbert Mann)
- Apocalypse Now (1979, directed/supervised by Francis Ford Coppola)
- Avatar (2009, directed by James Cameron)
- Beasts of No Nation (2015, directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga)
- District 9 (2009, directed by Neill Blomkamp)
- Downfall (2004, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel)
- Dr. Strangelove (1964, directed by Stanley Kubrick)
- Dunkirk (2017, directed by Christopher Nolan)
- Ender's Game (2013, directed by Gavin Hood)
- Eye in the Sky (2015, directed by Gavin Hood)
- Full Metal Jacket (1987, directed by Stanley Kubrick)
- Gallipoli (1981, directed by Peter Weir)
- Hurt Locker (2008, directed by Kathryn Bigelow)
- Hyena Road (2015, directed by Paul Gross)
- Lord of War (2005, directed by Andrew Niccol)
- Only the dead (2015, directed by Bill Guttentag and Michael Ware)
- Paths of Glory (1957, directed by Stanley Kubrick)
- Pearl Harbor (2001, directed by Michael Bay)
- Sand Castle (2017, directed by Fernando Coimbra)
- Starship Troopers (1997, directed by Paul Verhoeven)
- The Day After (1983, directed by Nicholas Meyer)
- The Fog of War (2003, directed by Errol Morris)
- The Thin Red Line (1998, directed by Terrence Malick)
- They shall not grow old (2018, directed by Peter Jackson)
- Thirteen days (2000, directed by Roger Donaldson)
- Zero Dark Thirty (2013, directed by Kathryn Bigelow)

Class Format

The course is delivered through weekly lectures. Students should review the A2L course announcements before coming to class. Additionally, students should frequently review the course A2L website for updates and guidance on course evaluations.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Think Piece – 25%, due Tuesday, May 17 at 11:59 pm.
2. Analytical Paper – 40%, due Tuesday, June 7 at 11:59 pm.
3. Final Exam – 35%, in-class on Wednesday, June 15, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Course Evaluation – Details

Think Piece (25%), due in A2L on Tuesday, May 17 at 11:59 pm

In this short writing assignment (1,000 words), students should engage with the material covered in the second week of the course. Students must make a case for either a Realist or Feminist theoretical approach to explaining or understanding war. The think piece should reference the ideas from at least one article/book chapter from the Realist (May 9) course readings and one article/book chapter from the Feminist (May 11) course readings. Students should not summarize the content of the readings but should use the readings as a basis to evaluate and make a case for why they prefer one of the theoretical perspectives. This assignment is a ‘think piece’ - as such, the student’s ideas and position vis-à-vis Realist and Feminist approaches to the study of war must be clearly articulated and substantiated.

Analytical Paper (40%), due in A2L on Tuesday, June 7 at 11:59 pm

This assignment must argue for the merits of analyzing war using one of two major theoretical approaches discussed in the course. Students must select one film from the list above (see the Required Materials and Texts section) as a case study for the analytical paper. Please note that students are encouraged to choose a movie available to them at no extra cost. The selection of the movie has no bearing on the assignment grade. The analytical paper must engage explicitly with course readings from at least two different theoretical perspectives from weeks 2 and 3 (May 9 to 18).

The Analytical Paper must be between 2,500 and 2,750 words in length and must be written in the format of a research paper with a clear thesis that argues for one theoretical approach that has the best possible relevance to the film chosen by the student. The paper must have a clear introduction, body and conclusion. Students must follow accepted academic writing conventions.

Further details, including a rubric, will be available on the course A2L website well before the assignment’s due date.

Final Exam (35%), In-class on June 15, 2022, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm

The Final Exam will be a 2-hour in-person, in-class examination of the course material. The examination will consist of two parts – a short answer section and a long answer section. The short answer section will require the students to identify, explain and outline the importance of concepts discussed throughout the course. The long answer section will require students to engage with broader questions that span several weeks of the course. Both sections will include elements of choice. Students are strongly encouraged to keep up with the course readings and lectures to succeed in the Final Exam. In addition, the June 13 class will be dedicated to course review and Final Exam advice.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (May 2 & 4, 2022) Introduction to the course and overview of theories of war and conditions of peace

May 2: Course overview, expectations, and assessments

Readings:

- No readings

May 4: An overview of the major theoretical and conceptual approaches to the study of war and conditions of peace.

Readings:

- Levy, Jack S. "The causes of war and the conditions of peace." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1, no. 1 (1998): 139-165.
- Sylvester, Christine. "Introduction: War questions for feminism and International Relations." In *War as Experience*, pp. 1-10. Routledge, 2013.

Week 2 (May 9 & 11, 2022) Realist and Feminist approaches to the study of war and peace

May 9: Realist Approaches

Readings:

- Waltz, Kenneth N. "The origins of war in neorealist theory." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988): 615-628.
- Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): 167-214

May 11: Feminist Approaches

Readings:

- Sjoberg, Laura. "Gender, structure, and war: what Waltz couldn't see." *International Theory* 4, no. 1 (2012): 1-38.
- Cohn, Carol. "Sex and death in the rational world of defense intellectuals." *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society* 12, no. 4 (1987): 687-718.

Week 3 (May 16 & 18, 2022) Liberal and Postcolonial approaches to the study of war and peace

May 16: The Liberal Peace

Readings:

- Owen, John M. "How liberalism produces democratic peace." *International security* 19, no. 2 (1994): 87-125.
- Rosato, Sebastian. "The flawed logic of democratic peace theory." *American political science review* 97, no. 4 (2003): 585-602.

Think Piece due on A2L on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 11:59 pm

May 18: Postcolonial approaches to war

Readings:

- Ibhawoh, Bonny. "Second World War propaganda, imperial idealism and anti-colonial nationalism in British West Africa." *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007).
- Barkawi, Tarak. "Decolonising war." *European Journal of International Security* 1, no. 2 (2016): 199-214.

Week 4 (May 23 & 25, 2022) Popular representations of war

May 23: No class (Victoria Day)

Readings:

- No readings

May 25: War in Film and Media

Readings:

- Dodds, Klaus. "‘Have you seen any good films lately?’ Geopolitics, international relations and film." *Geography Compass* 2, no. 2 (2008): 476-494.
- Weber, Cynthia. "Introduction". In *Imagining America at War: Morality, politics, and film*. Routledge, (2020): 1-9.

Week 5 (May 30 & June 1, 2022) International Politics, war and peace - I

May 30: Indigenous Nations

Readings:

- Crawford, Neta C. "The long peace among Iroquois nations." *War and peace in the ancient world* (2007): 348-368.
- Hamalainen, Pekka. "Introduction: Dark matter of History". In *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power*, Yale University Press, 2019, 1-10.

June 1: United Nations

Readings:

- Caitlin Ryan & Helen Basini (2017) "UNSC Resolution 1325 national action plans in Liberia and Sierra Leone: An analysis of gendered power relations in hybrid peacebuilding", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 11:2, 186-206.
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. "United Nations peacekeeping and civilian protection in civil war." *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (2013): 875-891.

Week 6 (June 6 & 8, 2022) International Politics, war and peace - II

June 6: Nuclear Weapons

Readings:

- Waltz, Kenneth N. "Nuclear myths and political realities." *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 3 (1990): 730-745.
- Harrington, Anne I. "Power, violence, and nuclear weapons." *Critical Studies on Security* 4, no. 1 (2016): 91-112.

Analytical Paper due on A2L on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at 11:59 pm

June 8: Children in War

Readings:

- Beier, J. *The militarization of childhood: thinking beyond the global south*. Springer, 2011.
- Riggan, Jennifer. "Raising the Empire's Children? Everyday Insecurities and Parenting the Privileged in the United States." In *Childhoods in Peace and Conflict*, pp. 223-240. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2021.

Week 7 (June 13 & 15, 2022) Course wrap up and final exam

June 13: Artificial Intelligence in Warfare and Final Exam Review

Readings:

- Haner, Justin, and Denise Garcia. "The artificial intelligence arms race: Trends and world leaders in autonomous weapons development." *Global Policy* 10, no. 3 (2019): 331-337.

June 15: Final Exam

- **In-person final examination.**

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate drop boxes on Avenue to Learn. Late submissions will be penalized (see the section on Late Assignments below). The Final Exam will be an in-person examination held during class times. All answers must be written on answer booklets provided by the Instructor. All answer booklets and question papers must be handed back to the Instructor before exiting the classroom.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+

MARK	GRADE
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Extensions for course assignments will only be granted under conditions of medical, family, or other extraordinary circumstances. All other late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (including weekends and holidays). Late assignments, even excused late submissions, will be graded, but no comments will be provided. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days beyond the original deadline without appropriate documentation from the Office of the Associate Dean of Social Sciences.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses with An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. email, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student-submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the Instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the Instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the University. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the University from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the Instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The Instructor and University reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The University may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

If the Instructor or a teaching assistant is not able to pass the daily COVID screening, they cannot provide an in-class meeting. In the case that the Instructor cannot attend the lecture, this will be announced on Avenue to Learn by 3pm on the day of the lecture. The lecture will be replaced by either an on-line lecture (which will be audio-recorded and posted to Avenue) or asynchronous lecture(s) posted to Avenue.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.