

THE CAUSES OF WAR
POLSCI 3Q03
Fall 2021, Term 1

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Lecture: Thursday asynchronous
lecture posted on Avenue to Learn

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Office Hours: Virtual Office Hours
by appointment on Zoom on
Thursdays 2:30pm – 3:30pm

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Course Description

This course examines International Relations (IR) theories about the causes of war between states and underlying systemic political conditions of militarization. The first half of the course provides an overview of IR debates about epistemology and methods of making knowledge claims about war. Through readings, lectures, and writing assignments you will learn to identify the sources of knowledge and research methods Realist, Liberal and Critical Theorists work with to explain and understand the causes of war. The second half of the course emphasizes political communities' self-identified priorities in contemporary global politics on war, militarization, peace, and justice.

Course Objectives

Through readings, lectures, and writing assignments you will learn to:

- Identify how Realist, Liberal and Critical Theorists answer questions such as: what are the causes of war between states? How do we know what we know about war? What responsibilities do academic researchers and institutions have to research participants and to communities impacted by war and militarization?
- Apply multiple theoretical lenses to an event in order to name the strengths and limitations of each theoretical approach
- Identify contributions of key theorists and research communities in International Relations epistemology and methods debates
- Make the distinction between problem-solving methods of explaining the causes of war between sovereign states and critical theory methods of understanding the underlying systemic political conditions of possibility for the violence of war and militarization

Required Materials and Texts

There is no textbook to purchase for this course. Links to all of the readings (e-journal articles, e-book chapters, films to stream online, etc.) are provided on the Avenue to Learn website.

Class Format

Course Delivery:

This course is delivered by asynchronous recorded lecture videos and accompanying power point presentations posted on Avenue to Learn (A2L). This material will be posted on Thursdays at 2:30pm as outlined in the weekly schedule below. Also, prior to each of the assignment deadlines, the Course Instructor and Teaching Assistant grader will be available for a synchronous live Question & Answer session on the Zoom link provided on Avenue to Learn. Students are encouraged to attend the Q & A sessions to ask questions about the assignments and benefit from hearing your classmates' questions. A Zoom meeting room link will be provided on A2L for these Q & A sessions for Thursday October 7 at 2:30pm to discuss the Short Essay Assignment, Thursday November 18 at 2:30pm discuss the Research Paper assignment, and Thursday December 2 at 2:30pm to discuss the Final Exam Study Guide.

Avenue to Learn:

Students are responsible for checking the course website regularly throughout the term as it will host:

- The syllabus
- Announcements and updates from the course director
- Asynchronous recorded lectures and power point presentations
- Links to the assigned readings
- Links to upload your writing assignments

Email Policy and Office Hours:

If you have a question about the course, your first step should be to read through the syllabus document and Announcements posted on Avenue to Learn. You should first contact your Teaching Assistant if you have a question about assignment requirements or a grade you have received on an assignment. If you have a question about academic accommodations or another matter, email the Course Instructor with the email subject line "3Q03 Causes of War". Your question will receive an email response or if needed an appointment for office hours will be set up. Please note that emails will be answered during regular office hours on weekdays and emails sent 24 hours before an assignment deadline may not be answered in time.

Course Evaluation – Overview

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of Final Grade
Short Essay	Thursday October 21 at 2:30pm	25%
Research Paper	Thursday December 2 at 2:30pm	40%
Final Exam	Written during exam period	35%

Course Evaluation – Details

NOTE: All assignments should include a separate cover page with your name, student number, and assignment title as well as a separate page at the end for your bibliography. All assignments should be double-spaced and in 12 point font. You can work with MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual of Style citation method. Whichever style you use it is essential to be consistent with that method throughout your paper, to include page number and author name information for all direct quotes and paraphrased ideas from sources, and to include a bibliography/works cited.

Short Essay due Thursday October 21 at 2:30pm (25%)

Watch **one** of the films listed below through the McMaster University Library online catalogue. Drawing on specific examples from the film, discuss how **one** of the International Relations theoretical approaches (a Realist, a Liberal, or a Critical theoretical approach) would analyze the film's strengths and limitations in its cinematic depiction of the causes of war. You do not need to do any independent research however your essay must make substantial reference to a minimum of **one** assigned reading from "Week 5. Representations of Security in Popular Culture" and a minimum of **three** other assigned readings from the course. Your essay must be 5 pages double-spaced, which is approximately 1250 words.

- Gillo Pontecorvo. 1966. *The Battle of Algiers*. The Criterion Collection.
- Stanley Kubrick. 1987. *Full Metal Jacket*. Warner Brothers.
- Terrence Mallick. 1998. *The Thin Red Line*. 20th Century Studios (FOX).
- Errol Morris. 2003. *The Fog of War*. Sony Pictures.
- Michael Moore. 2004. *Fahrenheit 9/11*. eOne Films (AFI).
- Neill Blomkamp. 2009. *District 9*. Sony Pictures.
- Michael Haneke. 2009. *Das weisse Band [The White Ribbon]*. Mongrel Media.
- Denis Villeneuve. 2010. *Incendies*. E1 Entertainment.
- Kathryn Bigelow. 2012. *Zero Dark Thirty*. Columbia Pictures.
- Göran Olsson. 2014. *Concerning Violence: Nine Scenes from the Anti-Imperialist Self-Defense*. Final Cut for Real.
- Laura Poitras. 2016. *Risk*. Praxis Films.
- Christopher Nolan. 2017. *Dunkirk*. Warner Bros. Pictures.
- Adam McKay. 2018. *Vice*. Annapurna Pictures.

Research Paper. Due Thursday December 2 at 2:30pm (40%)

An assignment sheet with full details on the assignment questions will be posted on the course website well in advance of the due date. Students will select one of the questions as outlined on the assignment handout on the topic of: the democratic peace theory, the human cost of war, remembering war: oral histories and the unspeakable, settler colonialism and Indigenous self-determination, and journalists reporting on war and militarization. The research paper assignment requires students to apply their knowledge of course material to independent research. This requires demonstrating an understanding of theories and case studies in course readings and lectures and also independently researching academic sources on the essay topic. The final paper will

include a clear thesis statement in the introduction that demonstrates your argument and analysis of the topic. The paper should be ten pages double-spaced, which is approximately 2500 words. Your paper should include a separate cover page with your name, student number, and assignment title as well as a separate page at the end for your bibliography.

Final Exam. Date to be scheduled during the exam period (35%)

The final exam will be an open book take home exam written and submitted online at the date/time scheduled by university registrar's office. The final exam will include two sections: 1) short term answers and 2) essay responses. For the first section you will be required to identify the source of the short term (which reading or lecture it appeared in), define the concept, and discuss its significance for explaining and understanding the causes of war. For the second section you will write two short essays of 500 words each.

A study guide outlining all possible final exam questions will be posted on Avenue to Learn on December 2. The study guide will include the full list of possible questions that will appear on the final exam, a shorter list will appear on the exam itself, and you will have choice in selecting which questions you write about for the exam.

At the beginning of the scheduled exam time the exam document will be posted on the Avenue to Learn website. Students will then have three hours to prepare and submit the exam document on the Avenue to Learn website.

Students are encouraged to attend the synchronous live Question & Answer session on December 2 to ask the Course Instructor and Teaching Assistant any questions about the study guide document and the exam day.

Grading of the short essay, reading journal, research paper will take into account:

Criteria	80 – 100% A+, A, A- Excellent to Exceptional	70 – 79% B+, B, B- Good to Very Good	60 – 69% C+, C, C- Fairly Competent to Competent	50 – 59% D+, D, D- Marginally Passing to Passing
Communication Clarity, organization, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, citation of sources	Technically flawless Concise sentence structure and organization	Few technical errors Clear sentence structure and organization	Many technical errors Some sentence structure and organization is unclear	Significant technical errors throughout Unclear sentence structure and lack of overall organization
Analytical Skills Grasp of meaning and ability to concisely synthesize individual insights with the course readings	Original analysis of course material Author's voice comes through clearly (research paper) Addresses all assignment requirements excellently	Demonstrates critical thinking skills applied to course material Addresses all assignment requirements with some errors	Descriptive rather than analytical writing Addresses most assignment requirements but with significant errors	No analysis or critical thinking skills demonstrated Substantial aspects of assignment requirements are not addressed
Application of Course Material Understanding of the significance of authors' arguments, key concepts and case studies presented in the assigned readings and research material	Exceptional application of concepts and case studies to demonstrate original insights about their significance for understanding the causes of war	Definitions of concepts and descriptions of case studies in course material is evident however further analysis is needed to demonstrate understanding of the author's main argument and/or demonstrate significance for understanding the causes of war	Attempts to link course material to case studies however analysis and critical thinking are not demonstrated	No demonstration of ability to apply course concepts and case studies to other situations

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1. Thursday September 9, 2021

The Causes of War

- Werner Levi. 1960. "On the Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace" in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 4(4): 411 – 420.

Week 2. Thursday September 16, 2021

International Relations Theories and Epistemologies of War

- Greg Cashman. 2013. "Chapter 1. Empirical Theory and the Causes of War" in *What Causes War? An Introduction to Theories of International Conflict, Second Edition*. Rowman & Littlefield International. Pages 9 – 21.
- Tshaukuesh Elizabeth Penashue. 2019. "Map" and "Part One: 1987 – 1989" in *Nitinikiau Innusi: I Keep the Land Alive*. Tshaukuesh Elizabeth Penashue and Elizabeth Yeoman, Editors. University of Manitoba Press. eBook pages 31 and 34 – 55.

Week 3. Thursday September 23, 2021

Levels of Analysis and the Balance of Power

- Fred Chernoff. "Chapter 4. The Balance of Power Debate: Why Do States Form Alliances?" in *Explanation and Progress in Security Studies*. Stanford University Press. Pages 123 – 180.

Week 4. Thursday September 30, 2021

The Militarization of Everyday Life

- Carol Cohn. 1987. "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" in *Signs*. 12(4), 687 – 718.
- Trevor Paglen. 2007. "Chapter 12. Groom Lake and the Imperial Production of Nowhere" in *Violent Geographies: Fear, Terror and Political Violence*. Derek Gregory and Allan Pred, Editors. New York: Routledge. Pages 237 – 254.

Week 5. Thursday October 7, 2021

TODAY: 2:30pm Synchronous Q & A session about the Short Essay Assignment

Representations of Security in Popular Cultures

- Cynthia Weber. 2005. "Who we think we were/are" in *Imagining America at War: Morality, Politics and Film*. Pages 10 – 28. New York: Routledge.
- Klaus Dodds. 2008. "Screening Terror: Hollywood, the United States and the Construction of Danger" in *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. 1(2): 227 – 243.
- J. Marshall Beier. 2007. "Grave Misgivings: Allegory, Catharsis, Composition" in *Security Dialogue*. 38(2): 251 – 269.

Week 6. Thursday October 14, 2021
Fall Term Break

Week 7. Thursday October 21, 2021
The Democratic Peace Theory

- John M. Owen. 1994. "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace" in *International Security*. 19(2): 87 – 125.
- David Mutimer. 2014. "Security and Social Critique" in Mary Kaldor and Iavor Rangelov eds. *The Handbook of Global Security Policy*. London: Wiley. 31 – 50.

Week 8. Thursday October 28, 2021
The Human Cost of War

- Jenny Edkins. 2011. "Chapter 6. Missing in Action" in *Missing: Persons and Politics*. Ithaca; Cornell University Press. Pages 131 – 154.
- Thomas W. Smith. 2014. "Reviewed Work: Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars" by Neta C. Crawford". *Human Rights Quarterly*. 36(4): 958 – 961.
- Kyle D. Killian and Anna M. Agathangelou. 2018. "The Wake of War: Relationships Among Gender, Trauma, Resources and Traumatic Stress in Refugee Families" in *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*. 30(3): 129 – 154.

Week 9. Thursday November 4, 2021

Remembering War: Oral Histories and the Unspeakable

- Urvashi Butalia. 2018. "Looking Back on Partition" in *Contemporary South Asia*. 26(3): 263 – 269.
- Mona Oikawa. 2012. "Chapter 8. 'It Is Part of My Inheritance': Handing Down Memory of the Internment" in *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory and the Subjects of the Internment*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 226 – 266.

Week 10. Thursday November 11, 2021

Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Self-Determination

- Paulette Regan. "Chapter 3. Deconstructing Canada's Peacemaker Myth" in *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*. Toronto: UBC Press, 2010. 82 – 110.
- Arthur Kroker. 2010. "The Mohawk Refusal" in *This is an Honour Song: Twenty Years Since the Blockades*. ARP Books. Pages 271 – 274.
- Alanis Obomsawin. 1993. *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*. Ottawa: National Film Board of Canada. 1 hour 59 minutes.

Week 11. Thursday November 18, 2021

TODAY: 2:30pm Synchronous Q & A session about the Research Paper

Cyberterrorism

- Safiya Umoja Noble. 2018. "Chapter 3. Searching for People and Communities" in *Algorithms of Oppression*. New York University Press, 2018. Pages 110 – 118.
- Aotearoa/New Zealand Government. 2020. "Chapter 5. Harmful Behaviours, right-wing extremism and radicalization" in *Ko tō tātou kāinga tēnei: Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain on 15 March 2019*. Pages 100 – 115.
- Amarnath Amarasingam and Marc-André Argentino. 2020. "The QAnon Conspiracy Theory: A Security Threat in the Making?" in *CTC Sentinel*. West Point: Combating Terrorism Center. 13(7): 37 – 44.
- Ryan Goodman and Andrew Weissmann. June 14, 2021. "Questions for FBI Director Wray About the January 6 Attack" in *Just Security*.

Week 12. Thursday November 25, 2021

Journalists Reporting on War and Militarization

- Walter Lippmann. 1922. "Chapter 15. Leaders and the Rank and File" in *Public Opinion*. The MacMillan Company. Pages 234 – 249.
- Nick Couldry and John Downey. 2004. "War or Peace?: Legitimation, Dissent and the Rhetorical Closure in Press Coverage of the Iraq War Build-Up" in *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime*. Stuart Allan and Barbie Zeiler, editors. New York: Routledge. Pages 266 – 282.
- Alex Danchev. 2015. "Troublemakers: Laura Poitras and the Problem of Dissent" in *International Affairs*. 91(2): 381 – 392.

Week 13. Thursday December 2, 2021

TODAY: 2:30pm Synchronous Q & A session about the Final Exam Study Guide

Final Class

- Research Paper Due today at 2:30pm
- The Final Exam Review Guide will be posted on Avenue to Learn today
- The Final Exam date will be scheduled during the exam period

Course Policies

Email Policy and Office Hours

If you have a question about the course, your first step should be to read through the syllabus document and Announcements posted on Avenue to Learn. You should first contact your Teaching Assistant if you have a question about assignment requirements or a grade you have received on an assignment. If you have a question about academic accommodations or another matter, email the Course Instructor with the email subject line "3QO3 Causes of War". Your question will receive an email response or if needed an appointment for office hours will be set up. Please note that emails will be answered during regular office hours on weekdays and emails sent 24 hours before an assignment deadline may not be answered in time.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail 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.

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 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](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), 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.

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.

Courses With An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, 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 e-mail 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.

Submission of Assignments

Assignments are to be submitted on the Avenue to Learn course website Turnitin applications and will be graded by the course teaching assistant. Assignments that are emailed to the instructor will not be accepted, unless a specific accommodation arrangement has been made in advance. The course teaching assistant will post a message in the Discussion section on Avenue to Learn to let you know how they will return your assignment grades and feedback notes to you.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) 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 A2L and/or Turnitin.com must notify their teaching assistant at least two weeks before the deadline to make arrangements for how the assignment will be submitted electronically to the teaching assistant. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. 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 information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

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 their work to be submitted 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.

Grades

All assignment grades and final grades are unofficial until the final course grades are released by the Office of the Registrar.

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+

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

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the dates and times outlined in this document. The penalty for late assignment submission is 3% per day including weekend days. No written assignments will be accepted ten days after the deadline, except in cases of accommodation.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Your physical and mental health and your overall wellness during the challenging circumstances of the pandemic are top priority. If at any point during the term a situation arises where you or a member of your household become sick, please follow the steps to submit your 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”.

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.

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.

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.

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.