Political Science 578
International Conflict: Theory and History

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-2
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Course Info: Spring 2010
Thursday 14:00-16:40
Dunkman Library

Course Description
This course aims to provide graduate students with a basic introduction to the history of the main components of international relations. We will examine the historical development of organizations that employ the use of force, i.e., state formation, the historical development of technologies of the use of force and some of the ideas that have historically motivated the application of the use of force. To that end, we will race through the last 800 years in seven-mile boots.

Course Requirements
Students will be expected to do all the reading and come to class prepared to discuss them. Students will be expected to critique current international relations theory based on the historical readings. Students will also be expected each class to present a question or puzzle derived from the readings that could serve as the basis for an article or dissertation. This puzzle can be empirical or theoretical. In addition, students are expected to complete the following three requirements.

- **Two summary papers** (20% each). Each student must summarize and critique the main theory or theories – stated implicitly or explicitly – in a book or series of articles. The summary should be no more than five double-spaced pages.

- **Final or Research paper** (40%). As research paper of about 25 pages that may address anything relevant to the course. If you have questions, feel free to come and discuss your topic with me before. *I urge you to consider the topic and research question in the first couple of weeks of the class.*

- **Class participation** (20%) Students are expected to come to class prepared, and ready to discuss the readings. Students should feel free to draw on their research from other classes and extend the discussion beyond the readings of a particular class.
Texts

The following books should be in the bookstore, but you are better off buying them from Amazon or some such online store:

Course Outline

Thursday, 14 January

1. Introduction: Making Sense of History

Thursday, January 21

2. The Use and Abuse of History

Thursday, January 28

3. History on the Grand Scale
Thursday, February 4

4. History on the Grand Scale


Thursday, February 11

5. Organizations for the Use of Force


Thursday, February 18

6. Organizations for the Use of Force


Thursday, February 25

7. Organizations for the Use of Force

Thursday, March 4

8. **Technology for the Use of Force**


Thursday, March 18

9. **Technology for the Use of Force**


Thursday, March 25

10. **Technology for the Use of Force**


Thursday, April 1

11. **Applying Force**


**Recommended:**

Thursday, April 8

12. **Motivations for the Use of Force: Racism**

  Or
  Or
  Or
  Or
- Philip Gourevitch. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: stories from Rwanda*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. 1998.

Thursday, April 15

13. **The Cold War**


Thursday, April 22

14. **History and Theory in International Relations**

The text deftly applies a combination of history and theory to evaluate conflict and cooperation among international actors, thus providing students a framework for understanding contemporary issues. From World War I to modern terrorism, information revolutions, and global governance, Understanding International Conflicts is a highly readable survey that answers as well as raises compelling questions about the future of international relations. Employs an analytical framework that pulls from history, theory, and practice to help students fully understand the complexities of world affairs. Introduces three major theoretical paradigms—realism, liberalism, and constructivism—and discusses how each can or cannot explain conflict and cooperation among international actors. In sociology, conflict theory states that society or an organization functions so that each individual participant and its groups struggle to maximize their benefits, which inevitably contributes to social change such as political changes and revolutions. The theory is mostly applied to explain conflict between social classes, proletariat versus bourgeoisie; and in ideologies, such as capitalism versus socialism.