

# LECTURE I:WAR

National Student Leadership Conference  
International Diplomacy Program  
Summer 2010

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# INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

- the management of cross-border flows through symbolic interaction
  - flows of people, commodities, rights, etc.
  - borders of sovereign territorial states
  - *authorized representation* is key
  - also, lots of words and gestures



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- everything that affects the relations between states
- can be divided into three aspects, or *systems*:
  - international military system
  - international economic system
  - international socio-cultural system
- each lecture focuses on one system



# WAR

- the *ultima ratio* of the international military system
- fighting a war is expensive...
- ...so is preparing for one or deterring one



# THREE QUESTIONS

1. what is war?
2. why is there war?
3. will there always be war?





# WHAT IS WAR?

- often a very political question
- declaration of war carries legal obligations
- raises the stakes
- metaphorical “wars”



Meutia Chaerani - Indradi Soemardjan, for wikimedia

# WHAT IS WAR?

- theological definition:  
triumph of the dark side  
of human nature
- behavioral definition:  
“1000 battle-deaths”
- operational definition:  
state-sponsored lethal  
violence
- “the sport of kings”





For WARRE, consisteth not in Battell onely, or in the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known...the nature of War, consisteth not in actuall fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.

— Thomas Hobbes, 1601

The object of war is not to die for your country but to make the other bastard die for his.

— General George S. Patton, 1970



# INTERNATIONAL WAR

- organized lethal violence directed across a state border
- includes threats to unleash such violence
- *public* violence: groups and uniforms



# STRATEGY

- war is intended to put *political pressure* on the other side
- most effective applied to decision-makers directly
- usually means fighting through defenses first





# WHY IS THERE WAR?

- “human nature”
  - humans aren’t *always* warlike
- “corporate profits”
  - lots of ways to make money
- “lack of accountability”
  - sometimes the people call for war



# WHY IS THERE WAR?

- states are war-making machines
- “claims a monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force”
- state capacity linked to war-fighting
- international anarchy





# PARTICULAR WARS

- security
- resources
- principles
  - regime-type
  - human rights
  - peacekeeping
- “the national interest”



# ATHENIANS AND MELIANS

- Athenians land with overwhelming force
- Melos is no threat
- “the strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must”
- Melians don’t submit, and perish
- Athens loses the war





# WILL THERE ALWAYS BE WAR?

- “no war” means “no recourse to threats of violence”
- sovereign territoriality/ anarchy opens the possibility of war
- “just war doctrine” as a way of *limiting* the frequency of war



# OLD WARS AND NEW WARS

- “old” wars:
  - fought by states on both sides
  - clearly defined strategic objectives
  - negotiated settlements based on battlefield fortunes
  - laws of war
- “new” wars:
  - fought by a variety of organizations
  - unclear/impossible victory conditions
  - categorical claims, so no clear way to negotiate anything
  - anything goes



# OPTIONS

- end state politics
- prove that war is in no one's interest
- use force reluctantly, as a last resort

