

SEMINAR ON FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING

w3962
Spring 2008
Thurs 4:10-6:00
1302 IAB

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Office hours: Weds 2-4
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How can we account for the foreign policies of states in the international system? Why do they behave the way they do? This seminar focuses on a critical examination of the major explanations for foreign policy outcomes. Our main emphasis is on decision-making. However, we will begin with explanations operating at other levels of analysis, such as the international system and domestic politics. We then explore decision-making explanations, including those derived from cognitive and social psychology, theories of motivation and personality, the impact of the political context, and the role of group dynamics. Throughout, we will be looking at these different approaches in the light of actual episodes taken largely, but not exclusively, from American foreign policy.

Prerequisites:

All students must have taken the introductory course in international politics.

Requirements:

1. Participation in class discussion.

Students are expected to attend all seminar meetings and participate in the discussion by contributing informed questions and comments and responding constructively to those of others. **Note** that seminars differ from other classes with mid-term and final exams in that it is not possible to skip readings and do them all at once before the exam. Your only chance to contribute the discussion of the readings is during the class for which they are assigned.

2. Introduce readings from one or two week's selections and lead class discussion.

3. Prepare a research paper (approximately 30 pp).

This will be based on a short **research proposal** (2 pp, double spaced) and a **preliminary bibliography** (1p) to be discussed with me in individual meetings.

Proposals are due February 28 and meetings will be scheduled for the following week.

Papers are due May 7 by 5pm. Extensions will be given only in cases of emergency (family emergency, documented illness, etc.) Late papers will be marked down. **Those who would like to have comments should provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope (home address).**

4. A brief presentation of your preliminary findings to the class (no more than 15 minutes).

This should be based on a **research note** specifying the question you are exploring, your hypothesis, the evidence on which it is based, the main competing explanations, and what is left to do to complete the paper (4-5 pp, double spaced and numbered). To ensure that your presentation is polished and conversational and that it fits within 15 minutes, it helps to practice your remarks in advance. **The research note will serve as the basis for discussion and must be distributed to class members no later than March 27.** It need not have formal footnotes but should include a bibliography and give some indication of your sources

Grading:

Class participation 20%
 Presentation of readings 10%
 Research paper and discussion 70%

Readings

Books marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered at the Labyrinth bookstore. All readings are on reserve in Butler Library. Readings marked with a double asterisk (**) are on e-reserves. The e-journals in which some articles can be found are also indicated.

January 24. Introduction

Explaining foreign policy. How to write a research paper.

Cameron Thies. "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations." International Studies Perspectives. November 2002. **
INGENTA. Be sure to read this before your proposals are due. It will be helpful in framing your topic and choosing your source material.

Paul Gordon Lauren, Gordon A. Craig, and Alexander L. George. Force and Statecraft, 2006, Ch. 7

Stephen Van Evera, *A Guide for Students of Political Science, especially the Appendix Sources: Their Use and Acknowledgment. A pamphlet on the proper citation of sources published by Dartmouth. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/> **This short guide is required reading for everyone writing a research paper.**

Anyone who needs to review basic social science terms and concepts will find a good short treatment in Stephen Van Evera, A Guide for Students of Political Science, especially pp. 5-21.

**January 31. Levels of Analysis; the International System and Domestic Politics
 Explanations of State Behavior**

What are the Levels of Analysis?

"Introduction." G. John Ikenberry, ed.. * American Foreign Policy. 5th ed. **Hereafter (I)**.
 Robert Jervis. Perception and Misperception in International Politics. ch. 1.
 Kenneth Waltz. Man, the State, and War. ch. 1.
 Ole R. Holsti. "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy." (I).
 Deborah Larson, Origins of Containment, pp.324-342.

International systems and domestic politics explanations of state behavior.

Kenneth Waltz. "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power." (I).

Alexander George. "Domestic Constraints on Regime Change." (I)

Ole Holsti. "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy." International Studies Quarterly (1992) 36, 439-466. ** JSTOR

SUPPLEMENTARY

J. David Singer. "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations" World Politics. October 1961. ** JSTOR

Kenneth Waltz, Man, the State, and War.

John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics.

Lawrence R. Jacobs and Benjamin Page, "Business Versus Public Influence in U.S. Foreign Policy." (I)

February 7. Domestic Structure and Cultural Explanations of State Behavior

Domestic structures and Foreign Policy

Thomas Risse-Kappen. "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies." World Politics. July 1991. ** JSTOR

SUPPLEMENTARY

John Ikenberry. "America's Liberal Grand Strategy." (I)

Michael Mastanduno. "The United States Political System and International Leadership." (I).

Samuel Huntington. "American Ideals versus American Institutions." (I).

Steve Chan and William Safran. "Public Opinion as a Constraint Against War: Democracies' Responses to Operation Iraqi Freedom." Foreign Policy Analysis, April 2006.

Case study: Are democracies more peaceful than other states?

Bruce Russett. Grasping the Democratic Peace. chs. 1, 2.

Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder. "Democratic Transitions, Institutional Strength and War." International Organization. Spring 2002. ** INGENTA SELECT

SUPPLEMENTARY

James Lee Ray. "Does Democracy Cause Peace?" American Review of Political Science. 1998

Spencer R. Weart. Never at War. 1998.

Stephen Rock, "Anglo-U.S. Relations, 1845-1930," in Paths to Peace, ed. Miriam Elman

John M. Owen. "Perceptions of the Liberal Peace," in *Ibid*.

Culture

Samuel P. Huntington. The Clash of Civilizations, Ch. 1, pp. 19-39. **

February 14. Organizational and Bureaucratic Explanations of State Behavior; the Role of Ideas

Organization Theory

Alexander George. Presidential Decisionmaking, ch. 5.

Case Study: Controlling Nuclear Weapons

Scott Sagan. "The Perils of Proliferation." International Security. Spring 1994.** JSTOR

Bureaucratic Politics

Graham Allison. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis." (I).

Stephen Krasner. "Are Bureaucracies Important? (Or Allison Wonderland)" (I).

The Role of Ideas

Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., Ideas and Foreign Policy, pp. 3-24

February 21

No class. Prepare research proposals and bibliography

February 28. Decision-making Explanations of State Behavior; How People are Supposed to Think, How They Really Think, and Whether it Matters

Research Proposals and Bibliography Due

Introduction

Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack. "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In." International Security 25, Spring 2001. ** EBSCO Read pp.107-14 and the case example on Saddam Hussein and Hafiz al-Asad. Skim the other cases.

George, Presidential Decisionmaking, "Introduction."

SUPPLEMENTARY

Sidney Verba. "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System." World Politics. 14, 1961. ** JSTOR

Deborah Larson. "Good Judgment in Foreign Policy: Social Psychological Perspectives," in Stanley Renshon and Deborah Larson. Good Judgment in Foreign Policy. Ch. 1.

Jack Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, 2003.

Rationality and Bounded Rationality

Barbara Farnham, * Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis, pp. 245-248.

Bryan D. Jones. "Bounded Rationality." Annual Review of Political Science. 1999, pp. 297-312.** **N.B.** This is a book, not a journal.

Jerel Rosati. "The Power of Human Cognition in the Study of World Politics." International Studies Review. Fall 2000, pp.45-53.** INGENTA

SUPPLEMENTARY

Herbert A. Simon. "Rationality and Political Behavior." Political Psychology.
March 1995.**

James March. "Bounded Rationality, Ambiguity, and the Engineering of Choice." in Jon Elster. ed.. Rational Choice.

"Special Issue: Political Economy and Political Psychology." Political Psychology.
March 1995.

Perception: Beliefs and Images

Philip Tetlock and Charles McGuire. "Cognitive Perspectives on
Foreign Policy." (I).

George, Presidential Decisionmaking, ch. 3.

Robert Jervis. "Hypotheses on Misperception." (I).

Yuen Foong Khong. "Seduction by Analogy in Vietnam." (I).

Case Study: Impact of Beliefs on Perception

Ole Holsti. "The Belief System and National Images: John Foster Dulles." Journal of
Conflict Resolution. September 1962. ** JSTOR

SUPPLEMENTARY

Jervis. Perception and Misperception. ch 6.

The rest of Rosati

Richard Herrmann, "Image Theory and Strategic Interaction in International Relations,"
Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, 2003.

March 6. Preference Formation. Decision-making Explanations--Motivation and PersonalityThe Decision-maker's Preferences (the National Interest)

Alexander George, On Foreign Policy, ch. 1.

Michael Roskin, "From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam," (I)

SUPPLEMENTARY

Arnold Wolfers, "National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol," in Wolfers, Discord and
Collaboration

George, Presidential Decisionmaking, ch. 13

Motivation

Farnham, Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis, pp. 254- 258

Richard Ned Lebow, Between War and Peace, pp. 107- 119.

Case Study: The Falklands War

David Welsh. "Culture and Emotion as Obstacles to Good Judgment: The Case of
Argentina's Invasion of the Falklands/Malvinas." in Stanley Renshon and Deborah
Larson. Good Judgment in Foreign Policy. Ch. 7. **

SUPPLEMENTARY

Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic: The Origins of the Falklands War," in Robert Jervis et al., eds., Psychology and Deterrence, ch. 5.

George Marcus, "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, 2003.

Personality

William McKinley Runyon. "Why Did Van Gogh Cut Off His Ear?" Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 1981.**

David Winter et al. "The Personalities of Bush and Gorbachev Measured at a Distance." (I).

Case Study: Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev

Fred Greenstein. "Impact of Personality on the End of the Cold War," Political Psychology. March 1998.**

SUPPLEMENTARY

Barbara Farnham. "Ronald Reagan and the Gorbachev Revolution." Political Science Quarterly, Summer 2001.

March 13. Decision-making Explanations-- Decision-making Processes

Decision-making Processes

George. Presidential Decisionmaking. ch. 2.

Farnham. Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis. pp. 248- 254.

Charles Lindblom. "The Science of 'Muddling Through'." Public Administration Review. Spring 1959.**

George. Bridging the Gap, Introduction, Chs 1,2

Farnham. "Introduction." in Farnham, ed.. Avoiding Losses\Taking Risks. 1994.

Jervis. "The Political Implications of Loss Aversion." in Ibid.

Case Study

Farnham. "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory" in Ibid (also in Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis, ch. 4).

SUPPLEMENTARY

Philip Zelikow. "Policy Engineering." International Security. Spring 1994.**

"Special Issue on Prospect Theory," ed. Rose McDermott. Political Psychology, vol. 25, no.s 2 and 3, April 2004 and June 2004.

March 20. Spring break. No class

March 27. Decision-making Explanations--the Impact of Context. The Importance of Individuals reprised

Research notes due

The Impact of the Political Context on Decision-making

Roger Hilsman. To Move a Nation, ch. 1.

Farnham, Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis, ch. 2 and Appendices B and C.

Case Study: Roosevelt and the Decision to Aid the Democracies Before World War II

Farnham. Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis, ch. 6.

The Importance of Individuals Reprised

Byman and Pollock, pp. 133-46.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power

April 3. Decision-making Explanations: the Group

Advisory Systems and Group Processes

George. Presidential Decisionmaking, chs. 4,6.

Alexander George and Eric Stern. "Harnessing Conflict in Foreign Policy Making: from Devil's to Multiple Advocacy." Presidential Studies Quarterly, September 2002** EBSCO

Groupthink

Irving Janis. Groupthink, chs. 1, 2, pp, 174-77.

George. "From Groupthink to Contextual Analysis of Policymaking Groups." in t'Hart et al., eds., Beyond Groupthink. ch. 2.

SUPPLEMENTARY

t'Hart et al., eds.. Beyond Groupthink

April 10

Presentation of Reports

April 17

Presentation of Reports

April 24.

Presentation of Reports.

May 1.

Presentation of reports.

Papers due May 7 no later than 5 pm.

GUIDELINES FOR COURSE WORK

Preparing for Class Discussion and Presentations

In addition to doing the readings, you should prepare for class by **analyzing and critiquing the readings**, considering the following sets of questions:

1. What is the central question or problem and what is the author's answer or argument?
 What is the logic of this answer or argument ? Does it make sense? Is it plausible?
 What evidence does the author use to support the argument? Is it convincing? What other evidence would weaken or support the argument?
 What is your position on this argument?
2. What are the themes connecting the readings in each section?
 How do the readings compete with or compliment eachother?
 Which do you finding most interesting and convincing?
 How do the readings relate to those in other sections?
3. What questions (theoretical, empirical) have the readings raised for you that you would like to discuss in class?
 What insights (about theory, history, currents events) have you had reading and analyzing these selections?

Presentation of the readings

Weekly presentations should be clear, concise, and **brief** (no more than 10 minutes per reading), and should raise questions for the whole class to discuss (use the questions just outlined as well as the ones you will receive for each set of readings).

Preparing the Research Proposal

Your paper topic should fit into the overall focus of the course, but need not be limited to its specific subject matter. It should be based on detailed evidence beyond the readings. Research using primary sources is encouraged.

Start thinking about your paper topic right away. If you do not already have some idea of what you would like to do, look ahead in the syllabus for topics that might interest you. If you are uncertain about what to focus on or how to proceed, consult with me well before the proposal is due.

Go to the library and investigate the articles and books that relate to your potential topic. There is no need to read them carefully at this point. Just scan them to see what is available and to put together your preliminary bibliography

The proposal itself should cover the following questions: 1. what is your research question? 2. what is your hypothesis? 3. what is the strongest competing explanation? 4. what is the evidence for your argument and how will you use it to test your hypothesis? 5. why is your topic important and interesting? for theory? for policy?

Preparing the Research Paper

Research papers should be typewritten, double-spaced, and documented with **footnotes** and **bibliography**. **Pages must be numbered.** Those who have not written a research paper before, as well as those wishing additional guidance, should consult Stephen Van Evera, [A Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science](#), 1997, especially the appendix and list of recommended guides.

Citations must conform the standard academic forms. If you have any doubt about what these are, look one of the style manuals listed in Van Evera. With regard to placement, I prefer footnotes.