FEATURE ARTICLES

The "Goldilocks Zone" of War and Peace

Jahara Matisek, United States Air Force Academy & Modern War Institute at West Point

Ryan Burke, United States Air Force Academy & Modern War Institute at West Point

ABSTRACT

There is a pedagogical hurdle to teaching war and peace. War should not be glorified by educators, and from a normative perspective, peace should be advocated for. However, the world we live in shows that the most developed and wealthy countries came into being precisely because of war, not because of attempts to remain pacific. In this article, we contend that educators should strive toward an educational "Goldilocks Zone" approach, where students are forced to grapple with counterfactuals and case studies to understand the implications of the human condition, cultures, and societies within conflict. We further argue that weak states breed persistent civil wars, and that overcoming this "conflict trap" requires war-making and the teaching of such to resolve contextualized political disputes. Moreover, we discuss the utility and limits of military force to include the precarious nature of militarily intervening in civil wars – past and present – in order to illustrate how future leaders should engage in constructive classroom engagements about humanitarianism in such scenarios. Finally, we conclude with an example of Africa as a "Petri Dish" for how to guide classroom discussions based on current events, with particular emphasis on enabling students to distinguish between subjective and objective assessment methods in their assessments of these complex cases.

Jahara "Franky" Matisek is an active duty officer in the US Air Force, currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Military and Strategic Studies at the US Air Force Academy. He is a former C-17 Pilot with over 2,000 hours of flight time, to include over 700 hours of combat time, and was a T-6 Instructor Pilot at the prestigious Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot program. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Northwestern University and is a two-time Non-Resident Fellow (2018-2019 & 2019-2020) with the Modern War Institute at West Point. His current research explores the impact of technology on future warfare, security force assistance, hybrid warfare, and the way weak states create effective militaries.

"War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things: the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse. When a people are used as mere human instruments for firing cannon or thrusting bayonets, in the service and for the selfish purposes of a master, such war degrades a people. A war to protect other human beings against tyrannical injustice; a war to give victory to their own ideas of right and good, and which is their own war, carried on for an honest purpose by their free choice,—is often the means of their regeneration."

John Stuart Mill
"The Contest in America"
Fraser's Magazine, February 1862

Without a doubt, few look fondly upon the horrors of war. From a normative perspective, there is little reason to frown upon desires for world peace and similar ubiquitous pursuits. And yet, despite the bulk of the world's population agreeing that such peace and harmony is desirable, the pursuits of world peace remain as elusive as the alchemists that tried converting lead into gold (Bizumic, et. al., 2013). Why is it that war cannot be eradicated? Could it be that the time-honored quote "War is merely the continuation of policy by other means" (p. 87) by the famous 19th century Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz (1832) holds the modern nation-state hostage with how international politics are conducted? If we accept the notion that humans are social creatures, could it be that there is a biological inclination to conduct violence in an organized fashion? Indeed, if one were to commit to reading all 1,225 pages of Leo Tolstoy's (1869) 19th century classic, *War and Peace*, one would see how various social, economic, emotional, and philosophical factors complicate the spectrum between conflict and cooperation. Hence, our desire to reach a scientific consensus on understanding war and peace between states (i.e., interstate) and within states (i.e., intrastate) is incredibly muddled, but there should be some middle ground – a "Goldilocks Zone" if you will – when it comes to teaching it.

The Origins Of War: Written in Our DNA?

In certain regions of Sudan and Kenya, there are archaeological signs of humans waging organized wars (most likely over resources) dating back to 8,000 – 10,000 BCE (Lahr et. al., 2016). Considering this, a growing body of evidence shows that other social animals conduct their own form of "war" – albeit for personal gain. For example, chimpanzees in Uganda have been observed creating "gangs" with one another and fighting jointly against other

Dr. Ryan Burke is an associate professor and Curriculum Director in the Department of Military & Strategic Studies at the U.S. Air Force Academy and is a veteran Marine Corps officer. He writes on military-involved domestic and international support operations; national security and defense policy; military operational art; and polar warfare. His work has appeared in international journals; with the Strategic Studies Institute; in professional military education venues; and myriad other print and online mediums. He is a 2019-2020 Non-Resident Fellow with the Modern War Institute at West Point, an opinion contributor on national security matters for the *The Hill*, and is also the chief editor of *Military Strategy, Joint Operations, and Airpower: An Introduction* (Georgetown University Press, 2018).

groups to expand their territories (Mitani, Watts & Amsler, 2010). Not to be outdone, some slave-making ants will raid the nests of other insects for the purposes of capturing the brood to bring back to their colony, enslaving them to perform menial tasks for their queen (Brandt, Heinze, Schmitt & Foitzik, 2006). Based on this, does this mean that organized forms of violence are inherently natural and purely done for personal gain, and should be accepted as such? Or should we acknowledge that the human condition is more "evolved" because we are willing to wage war over "ideas" in lieu of materialism? Based on such findings, is there a way to teach the pursuits of peace and war while emphasizing cultural variance and the unique interactions fostered within different societies? Can the lens of the human condition better explain why some state and non-state actors still rationally (from their point of view) resort to brutal acts of violence to pursue their own political, economic, and/or ideological aims?

To answer such questions requires us to find a pedagogical Goldilocks Zone of war and peace; a "just right" place where we discuss the merits and faults of the war-peace dynamic that emphasizes a balanced approach to achieving peace through limited war. Creating such intellectual space permits a better understanding of the natural human inclination for conflict, but also where the pursuit of war and peace intersects with state-building to forge stable and capable countries in the 21st century. We need to understand the unique cultural elements motivating war and peace between nations, and what leads citizens to take up rebellion against their fellow citizens in an internal war (i.e., civil war). At the same time, it is too simplistic to assume that conflicts can be easily explained by Geoffrey Blainey's (1988) assertion that "wars usually begin when two nations disagree on their relative strength, and wars usually cease

when the fighting nations agree on their relative strength" (p. 293).

Such an intellectual pursuit is not just an important research avenue, but a necessary pedagogical quest to educate future military leaders, instilling character and critical thinking, to consider how complex societal elements can lead to aggression or cooperation. Encouraging our students and citizens alike to fully consider societal and cultural elements that drive their respective governments to seek war or sue for peace is a necessary pedagogical endeavor to ensure our future military officers are not the "bomb first, ask questions later" types. Conversely, it is equally important that they do not become apathetic peaceniks indifferent to the occasional necessity of military conflict. Future military officers must fully comprehend the role they can play in influencing and constraining their state. In fact, some educators – with personal wartime experience – are struggling to connect with a generation of students who have grown up with a nation at war, and have effectively been desensitized to a global war on terror that exists, but with an American culture that has obscured the importance and relevance of almost two decades of war as commonplace (Bonin, 2017).

Contending with Identity in War

While there is a substantial emphasis on the humanistic consequences of war and peace making, there can sometimes be a missing debate on implications to (and emanating from) the state and global system. Within such a framework, the centripetal forces of globalization (e.g. air travel, telecommunication, etc.) flattens the planet, bringing humans together in the pursuit of positive peace (e.g. eliminating exploitative social and economic systems). However, there is a dark side to globalization (e.g. social media, income inequality, etc.) that acts as an equally oppositional force to attempts

to integrate humanity (Barash & Webel, 2013; Reno & Matisek, 2018). These centrifugal tendencies are bringing back new forms of divisive identity politics that are more fragmented and hostile (Petersen, 2011).

At present, globalization appears to be winning as various civil wars grind on with little hope of viable peace or capable states emerging from such chaos. This is a truly unfortunate situation as the Nobel winning economist, Amartya Sen (2007) wrote in *Identity and Violence* that the masses can be manipulated by malevolent propagandists to foment violence through "the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people," (p. 2) which is eventually "championed by proficient artisans of terror" (p. 2). Sen (2007) formulates that identity is merely an illusion in that some people exercise limited rationality in accepting it, while identity is also a tremendous medium for rational elites to use as a strategic tool in pursuing certain political objectives. Worse yet, there are even actors, known as "spoilers" in various post-conflict zones that rely on "emotions" as a way of mobilizing support for violence against those of a different identity, even though such spoiling behavior damages their own economic interests and long-term viability of the state (Petersen, 2011; Stedman, 1997). How do we rationally convince such peace-spoilers that their mobilization of violence for the purpose of revenge is making everyone worse off? And how does the 21st century educator strategically relate such nuance and complexity to a classroom full of students, most of whom have grown up in a culture where perpetual war is woven into the normative fabric of society? To fully address such pedagogical questions first requires us to understand why some consider war a justifiable action.

Justifying War

As suggested by John Stuart Mill in the epigraph, there is a time and place for warfare; it just requires a nuanced understanding of what is a justifiable war and what is just raw belligerence for personal gain. However, there are the bellicose few, such as U.S. Army General George Patton (1990), who at the end of World War I, wrote poems and essays complaining about the emergence of "peacetime" since it removed societal "virtues…[of] sacrifice and purpose" (p. 85).

> *As suggested by John Stuart Mill in the epigraph, there is a time and place for warfare; it just requires a nuanced understanding of what is a justifiable war and what is just raw belligerence for personal gain.*

While one should never fully indulge in the provocative "give war a chance" argument (Luttwak, 1999), we also need to remain level headed in that "peace without the threat of cold steel" is not a viable worldview either. This requires an understanding of the limits of peace. Indeed, many scholars would agree that British and French appeasement of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s supported negative peace (i.e., war was avoided; Barash & Webel, 2013). However, it allowed Hitler to rebuild German military might, starting World War II with the upper-hand, enabling the Holocaust, and leading to the deaths of over 60 million people worldwide as a result of the war. An earlier intervention against Hitler might have stymied such a buildup, saved lives, and signaled a resolve to squash any sort of future aggressive behavior from him and similar bellicose nations. But this is why context matters. Whereas

intervening against Hitler might well have saved millions of lives, the American military intervention in the Vietnamese civil war (1955-1975) missed the nuance and context of their internal war. The independently communist North Vietnam state, which had militarily won its independence from France, sought Vietnamese reunification through the liberation of South Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh perceived it as a French colonial puppet state run by an elite that lacked legitimacy to most of the population and was too corrupt to even generate the veneer of authority or credibility (McMaster, 1998). This begs a more important question for the student of history and strategy: "When is it appropriate for an external military force to intervene in a civil war?" Reaching such an answer requires an educator to reframe the question: How best should we teach such complex retrospective critical thinking and ensure our students grasp the cultural complexities necessary to inform their understanding of such actions? The answer to the educator's question here, we argue, rests in the use of counterfactuals and case studies.

If we are to be effective educators and ones who succeed in enhancing our students' abilities to more fully and completely understand the complexities of the war-peace dynamic and its relation to state-building, asking students to read and regurgitate history remains woefully inadequate for the modern collegiate classroom. Such an approach sits idly at the bottom of Blooms' (1956) Taxonomy and asks students only to know the material they study; it does nothing to engage the students and challenge them to progress higher into Bloom's learning framework known throughout the higher education industry. Using counterfactuals and case studies, however, requires students to expand beyond knowledge and understanding and evolve into the higher orders of learning where application, synthesis, and evaluation of material ensures deeper retention and improved understanding. To address

our original question in this way, let us consider the following counterfactual case studies.

Intervening military force from an external state or organization has become much more common since the end of World War II (Lundgren, 2016). This has been a function of a more robust international community, but what about a time when there was an absence of international authorities? This leads us to consider how the American Civil War (1861-1865) would have played out if the United Nations (UN) had existed at that time. What if UN peacekeepers were deployed to the Mason-Dixon Line in 1861 to create a demilitarized zone between the warring factions? Such actions would have most likely prevented the Union North and Confederate South from militarily resolving their dispute over the legality of slavery. Seeing how most contemporary UN peacekeeping missions rarely resolve internal disputes among elite coalitions, it is probable that such a scenario would have resulted in the creation of two countries within the United States: A slave owning Confederate South and a free Union North. Employing such historical counterfactuals is an important testing of our assumptions on the usefulness of war and its transformational effect, even for humanitarian purposes. Such techniques bring tangible value to the classroom and offer an engaging, student-focused pedagogical approach to aid students in their understanding of the complexities of strategically-informative historical cases. For an additional point of analysis, just consider the failure of the international community to adequately intervene in the 1994 Rwandan genocide and how there was only a small UN peacekeeping force without a robust mandate to protect civilians.

While we are not suggesting that the death of almost one million Rwandans was a necessary evil, it should be noted that this traumatic event allowed a rebel

group of Tutsis (known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front) led by Paul Kagame to expel the murderous Hutu Interahamwe regime and install a government that has behaved much more benevolently. Since 1994, Rwanda has proven highly capable of keeping the peace and stability internally, and the elimination of Hutu and Tutsi identity in 2004 has helped further consolidate the Rwandan nationalist identity, making the possibility of future civil strife less likely. Similarly, instead of the usual retribution model seen in most post-conflict states (also known as the spiral of violence) where revenge is taken out against former enemies, the justice and reconciliation process in Rwanda has helped the resource-poor country escape the "conflict trap" (Collier, 2007; Lyall, 2009).

Such success truly is a testament to President Kagame's vision and leadership. Rwanda has managed to grow and modernize, thereby avoiding this cyclical conflict problem. As Collier (2007) argues, if leaders cannot find political solutions to perpetual violence, this prevents a country from ever achieving long-term peace and/or economic growth. Although admittedly recent field research in Rwanda reveals the imposition of peace by Kagame's strong and centralized one-party state has led to somewhat of a police state where dissent is rarely tolerated. For example, "undesirables" are sent to Iwawa Island for "rehabilitation," usually to never return. And yet, Rwanda has consistently ranked as one of the safest places to live in Africa since 2011. This lends great weight to Monica Duffy Toft's (2009) suggestion that the international community should refrain from intervening in a civil war, as this allows "politics" to work its course – however violent they might be – so that the civil war is shortened. Such international refrain would permit the forging of a long-term political solution that contributes to the overall development of the state.

Understanding the cultural and societal nuance of a given case is critical to decision making. Viewing Rwanda objectively in 1994, many leaders may have viewed the 800,000 casualties as a humanitarian crisis and concluded that military intervention was necessary to restore peace and order. Looking subjectively at the situation as many did – and as we encourage through the use of detailed case studies – enables analysis toward a greater depth of understanding about the specific context in which the situation rests. This depth

> *Understanding the cultural and societal nuance of a given case is critical to decision making.*

produces more informed decision making that extends beyond an often emotional reaction to objective realities and instead, more fully considers the present and future situation resulting from various potential courses of action. This form of analysis promotes constructive engagement in higher order thinking, integrating the less obvious but often more significant elements of a culture or society to best inform an approach. It is this level of analysis resting between war and peace – the Goldilocks Zone – that we must strive for in our classrooms when discussing conflict. Failure to reach the Goldilocks Zone could produce students supportive of the "warheads on foreheads" model of analysis on one end, or the "sunshine and rainbows" model on the other. There is more to conflict than these binary perspectives, for war and peace are not mutually exclusive and often come hand-in-hand. Understanding the human, cultural, and societal conditions leading to one or the other is a critical skill for our future officers in the continued pursuit of character and leadership development. Similarly, it is equally important to teach students about the perception, justification, and self-interests of countries that choose to militarily intervene

– and the outcome – when considering interventions into the civil wars of Libya and Syria, for example.

Another irony presents itself if we look at the history of state-building in Europe, and elsewhere, as it seems that the most powerful Western states (e.g., United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, etc.) came into being through territorial expansion and immense bloodshed (Tilly, 1975). Further understanding of relevant case studies may help. Denials about genocides exist elsewhere in other modern nation-states (e.g., Aboriginals in Australia, Amazonian tribes in Brazil, Armenians in Turkey, etc.). Part of this is because it is uncomfortable to concede such points, but it also threatens to undermine the "imagined community" of historically created narratives of nationalist identities etched into their school textbooks (Anderson, 1983; Cooper, 2008).

Acceptance of the horrors of war – in many ways – seems to have neutralized the belligerent tendencies of Germany and Japan since the end of the Second World War. The pacific stances of these countries, while partly imposed by the victors of that war, have constrained the size of their militaries and scope of their respective foreign policies. At the same time, the placatory nature of internal politics in Germany and Japan has caused them to focus on the peaceful pursuits of economic growth, positive participation in the international community, and on taking leading roles in numerous international organizations committed to diplomatic solutions and human rights (Dower, 2000). One should wonder if this sort of conciliatory behavior is sustainable for the near future as new security threats emerge, possibly giving rise to contentious politics that may drive rearmament and belligerence. This should give pause to educators and students alike. Are the actions of a state writ-large dependent upon cultural trends or structural factors outside of their control?

Thus, it may be difficult for students to accept how their country came to be – and how warfare was a vital component of this state formation process. The sociologist Charles Tilly (1975) famously said "war made the state and the state made war" (p. 42) to explain how so many European countries emerged as the most powerful states in the world. State formation, according to Tilly (1975), was linked to the ability of a state to collect resources and wage war. The byproduct of this was the creation of bureaucracies and other forms of state capacity to deal with the complexity of supporting such military operations (e.g. logistics, etc.). Such power translated into resources being directed toward governing peripheral territories and protecting them from aggressive neighbors. Similarly, the renowned archaeologist-historian Ian Morris (2014) contends that throughout centuries of bloody human history, the increasing complexities of warfare went hand-in-hand with increasingly complex societies. Only those societies that could adequately field the correct amount of military strength would avoid destroying their own society, and through such war pursuits, humans ironically became less violent, wealthier, and lived longer (Morris, 2014). In many ways, the account presented by Morris (2014) illustrates how much negative peace dominates the way in which various societies think of coordinating relations with other nations.

Unsurprisingly there is an integral Goldilocks Zone to such war and state formation explanations. If the state is too focused on war and it demolishes its legislative assemblies, then it becomes an autocratic and militant regime (Downing, 1992). However, if it is too passive and focused on a nationalist constitutionalism, then it likewise demolishes its perceived strength and becomes a target for exploitation. China is illustrative of the former point. Despite China becoming the first modern state in the world in 3rd century BCE, the

brutal consolidation of state power into the hands of a few political elites in the Qin Dynasty was an inflection point in its history (Fukuyama, 2011). This critical juncture created a political system and culture that is path dependent toward authoritarianism, a fact that some scholars argue continues to constrain and influence the behavior of modern day China (Hui, 2005). However, if a state gets too caught up in constitutionalism or does not create large enough elite coalitions, then it may be unable to generate enough capacity for war, and it will be conquered by a more capable state. Poland is representative of the latter problem, whereby its history is full of neighboring powers conquering its land (Downing, 1992). The Goldilocks Zone would prescribe a state to adhere to a balanced approach between military aggression and passivity – a just right approach that would sufficiently provide for the defense of a nation while avoiding antecedent pitfalls of past militant regimes. Encouraging our students to understand the necessity of the Goldilocks Zone concept is a challenge. Such an approach must avoid the perceptions of advocating only for interventionism or isolationism. As previously discussed, the utility proposition inherent in war often sacrifices state resources now for perceived gain later. This is why educators should rely on case studies of the African continent because each of the 54 states (and the two autonomous states of Somaliland and Western Sahara) are at different stages of state-formation.

Africa as an Example for Classroom Discussions on War and Peace

Grappling with the issues of stability and conflict is precisely why educators should bring in classroom discussions about Africa, as there is always a constant stream of news on emerging insurgencies, but also new peace deals being brokered. This region of the world is a challenge for scholars and students of war and peace alike, as there is a lack of strong states in Sub-Saharan Africa (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982). What is most distinctive about this region, besides every African state being a former colony (except for Ethiopia), is that there has been a limited amount of high-intensity interstate conflicts since 1946 (Mentan, 2017). The permissive ban on waging irredentist warfare in Africa since a 1963 treaty by the Organisation of African Unity – now the African Union (AU) as of 2002 – has been considered a critical mechanism for decreasing the number of African interstate wars, which simultaneously appears to have stemmed state formation (Englebert, 2009; Hurd, 2017). Leading Africanist scholars such as Jeffrey Herbst (2014) and William Reno (2011) contend that this treaty removed the rationale for most African governments to create armies and state capacity to guard and govern their large territories that had low-population densities.

Lacking incentive to engage in interstate war led to alternative forms of governance strategies emerging in Africa, namely patrimonialism, which undermined formal state institutions (Pitcher, Moran, & Johnston, 2009). This led many African states to use their militaries for domestic repression and for the pursuit of natural resources to enrich themselves and their political elites. Hence, particular forms of civil wars ravaged the African continent, as various actors vied over access to natural resources, patronage networks, and armaments from various Western and Eastern governments (Howe, 2001).

This problem of civil war was best summed up by Robert Bates (2008) when he stated, "I can find no way of analyzing the origins of insurrection without starting with the behavior of governments" (p. 6-7). Thus, since few African states built large armies, few states ever developed the capacity or desire to generate revenue (i.e., taxation) from their citizenry. Such a scenario effectively created the typical African country where

few public goods and services are provided since the state coffers are empty, as African regimes have grown increasingly reliant and dependent on foreign aid and assistance to provide basic services. Such realities that face the African continent provides educators ample space to circumnavigate how political decisions toward

> *...Future military officers must know and understand military context and theory to best inform the future application of the military forces they will soon lead. We advocate that we must emphasize military and strategic studies in our academic curricula as a complement to leader development.*

war (or peace) play out in real time. Internal violence in places such as Somalia and South Sudan seems likely for the foreseeable future, and countries such as Senegal appear to be on the opposite side of the spectrum, with continued peace likely as well. Finally, educators and students can look to other large geo-political and cross-cultural war and peace case studies to include Miguel Angel Centeno's (2002) seminal study of state-formation in *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin Americ*a, provides a wide-array of cases to further investigate the role of context in war- and peace-making.

Implications for Leader Development

Studying and understanding the dynamics of conflict is a necessary precondition for successful military leadership. Whether African conflict or Latin American strife; whether Middle East wars or Vietnam hostilities; the particular region of study serves as the backdrop to the topic of war. While the character of war changes from place to place and year to year, the

nature of war remains constant. It is, in its essence, a struggle amongst people taking up arms to impose their will on another. To effectively lead in future conflict, future officers must grapple with conflict dynamics in the classroom. Studying war and its complexity is not optional for cadets at the military service academies or those enrolled in Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. The pursuit of a bachelor's degree – the prerequisite academic credential for commissioning – must be accompanied by focused study of conflict and war. What good is a commissioned military officer who knows nothing of military history and contemporary conflict? Learning to lead in the military must be associated with learning from war.

As educators, it is our charge, our duty even, to ensure exposure to and understanding of the myriad complexities of conflict and war. We teach, and our students learn through, examining historical context and understanding how the lessons from history inform the development of military theory that ultimately influences the application of the military instrument of power. As such, future military officers must know and understand military context and theory to best inform the future application of the military forces they will soon lead. We advocate that we must emphasize military and strategic studies in our academic curricula as a complement to leader development. There are 10,000 years of human conflict and war from which our future leaders can and must learn. Nowhere is this more important than at the service academies. To support this assertion, we need only look to one of the most revered military officers in modern time; the Warrior Monk, James N. Mattis.

In his 2019 best-selling book *Call Sign CHAOS*, former Marine Corps general and former Secretary of Defense Mattis warns military leaders that "if you haven't read hundreds of books, you are functionally illiterate, and you will be incompetent, because your personal experiences alone aren't broad enough to sustain you" (Mattis, 2019, 42). In other words, case studies and counterfactuals, or studying and learning from history and contemporary conflict, is a necessity for military leadership development. Learning from those who have gone before us and striving to avoid repeating their mistakes must be emphasized as we develop the future leaders of our military forces who will soon lead men and women into combat armed only with the tools we have provided them through their training and education prior. We assert that this toolkit must include the Goldilocks Zone of teaching war and conflict. Future leaders must be exposed to the tacit difficulties of war through rigorous academic study to sufficiently grasp the realities of the same once faced with it. The Goldilocks Zone of teaching war provides the bounds in which we develop a 1,000-year mindset in our future leaders.

The 1,000-year mindset implies that our leaders possess the depth of knowledge and understanding in relevant military context and theory to sufficiently and effectively inform the application of the military instrument of power they will soon lead. If we fail to provide this depth of knowledge and exposure to conflict and war to our future leaders prior to their assumption of positions of influence, then we fail the people these men and women serve. To develop the 1,000-year mindset in our future leaders, inclusion of military and strategic studies in educational and leadership development curricula is a necessity. We must resist the narrative that studying war is the devil's work and has no place in the classroom. Studying war is, in our opinion, the single most critical and professionally

relevant undertaking for a future officer's development as an effective leader. Moreover, the study of strategy is not just a military-specific discipline; it applies to the politics of management, finance, leadership, economics, and other problems that necessitate the employment of ways plus means.

Conclusion

Is humanity fatalistically destined for systemic combat or the preparation for warfare? If we accept causal links that the ability of the state to generate military strength is associated with a state capable of imposing peace, then this appears most likely to bring harmony and deter aggression. For instance, Switzerland is generally viewed as a beacon of peace due to its inclination for neutrality – its last interstate conflict was during the Napoleonic Wars (1805-1815). Yet, Swiss society has been quite militarized since the 19th century as every male has been conscripted into military service and each able-bodied man is issued a rifle to keep at home (Killias, 1990). The capacity of a state to conduct activities, such as providing for the safety and security of its territory and citizens, is thus a precondition before that state (and others) can pursue positive peace solutions, such as policies for decreasing income inequalities or negotiating exclusive economic zones that benefit all actors equally (Campbell & Hall, 2017).

Regardless, it seems that strong and belligerent states are no longer the greatest threat to world peace. American President George W. Bush (2002) astutely identified this new 21st century problem with the world being "threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones." We need to acknowledge that the ability to impose peace is somewhat correlated with the ability and capacity for warfare as well. The Latin adage *Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum* (if you want peace, prepare for war) rings true in context now just as it has for centuries of warfare prior. Hence, we need to integrate

into our classroom discussions the conceptions of state power and how it is generated, to include what causes a collapsed state and what it takes to make that state whole and peaceful again (Straus, 2012). Such solutions require looking at the agency of individuals, cultures, and societies, but also the way the international system structures such war-peace deliberations.

Within this vein, we should emphasize the Goldilocks Zone of war-peace dynamics in our classroom discussions as an alternative form of state-building, especially in regards to the contemporary environment of civil wars across Africa and the Middle East. In using counterfactuals and case studies in the classroom to discuss such dynamics, educators can guide students through some of the most challenging discussions while facilitating enhanced knowledge and understanding through advanced application, synthesis, and evaluation of material. A Goldilocks Zone approach to war and peace should be understood as a necessary framework for interpreting the literature and contemporary empirical problems facing scholars, students, and nations alike. For one day, our students will become our scholars; and our scholars will inform our nation's evolving view on the balance between war and peace. Providing critical thought on this topic will ensure that future leaders will seriously consider when and where war and peace can be made without negative externalities and the civic implications of such decisions.

◆ ◆ ◆

References

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. New York: Verso Books.

Barash, D. P., & Webel, C. P. (2013). *Peace and Conflict Studies*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Bates, R. H. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bizumic, B., Stubager, R., Mellon, S., Van der Linden, N., Iyer, R., & Jones, B. M. (2013). On the (in) compatibility of attitudes toward peace and war. *Political Psychology. 34*(5), 673-693.

Blainey, G. (1988). *The Causes of War*. New York: The Free Press.

Bloom, B. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

Bonin, T. (2017). The Challenge of Teaching War to Today's Students. *The Atlantic*, November 8. Retrieved from https:www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/11/teaching-students-about-war/545351/

Brandt, M., Heinze, J., Schmitt, T., & Foitzik, S. (2006). Convergent evolution of the Dufour's gland secretion as a propaganda substance in the slave-making ant genera Protomognathus and Harpagoxenus. *Insectes Sociaux, 53*(3), 291-299.

Brantlinger, P. (1998). Forgetting genocide: Or, the last of The Last of the Mohicans. *Cultural Studies, 12*, 15-30.

Bush, G. W. (2002). *The national security strategy of the United States of America*. Washington DC: Executive Office of the President. Retrieved from 2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf

Campbell, J. L., & Hall, J. A. (2017). *The Paradox of Vulnerability: States, Nationalism, and the Financial Crisis*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Centeno, M. A. (2002). *Blood and debt: War and the nation-state in Latin America*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press.

Clausewitz, C. V. (1989). On War (M. Howard & P. Paret, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1832).

Collier, P. (2007). *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cooper, B. (2008). Denying Genocide: Law, Identity and Historical Memory in the Face of Mass Atrocity Conference. *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution, 9*, 447-452.

Dower, J. W. (2000). *Embracing defeat: Japan in the wake of World War II*. New York: WW Norton & Company.

Downing, B. M. (1992). *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Englebert, P. (2009). *Africa: Unity, sovereignty, and sorrow*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Fukuyama, F. (2011). *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Goldfein, D. (2016). *"Strengthening Joint Leaders and Teams – A Combined Arms Imperative."* October 13, 2016. Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, Washington DC. Retrieved from https://www.afsig.af.mil/Portals/73/Documents/CSAF%20 Strengthening%20Joint%20Leaders%20and%20Teams%20-%20 a%20Combined%20Arms%20Imperative.pdf.

Herbst, J. (2014). *States and power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Howe, H. M. (2001). *Ambiguous order: military forces in African states*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Hui, V. T. (2005). *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hurd, I. (2017). The Permissive Power of the Ban on War. *European Journal of International Security, 2*, 1-18.

Ikenberry, G. J. (2009). *After victory: Institutions, strategic restraint, and the rebuilding of order after major wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Jackson, R. H., & Rosberg, C. G. (1982). Why Africa's weak states persist: The empirical and the juridical in statehood. *World politics, 35*, 1-24.

Killias, M. (1990). Gun ownership and violent crime: The Swiss experience in international perspective. *Security Journal, 1*(3), 169-174.

Lahr, M. M, Rivera, F., Power, R. K., Mounier, A., Copsey, B., Crivellaro, F., & Edung, J. E., et al. (2016). Inter-group violence among early Holocene hunter-gatherers of West Turkana, Kenya. *Nature, 529*(7586), 394-411.

Lundgren, M. (2016). Conflict management capabilities of peace-brokering international organizations, 1945–2010: A new dataset. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 33*(2), 198-223.

Luttwak, E. N. (1999). Give war a chance. *Foreign Affairs, 78*, 36-44.

Lyall, J. (2009). Does indiscriminate violence incite insurgent attacks? Evidence from Chechnya. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 53*(3), 331-362.

Mattis, J., & West, B., (2019). *Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead*. New York: Random House.

McMaster, H. R. (1998). *Dereliction of duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the lies that led to Vietnam*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Mentan, T. (2017). *Dilemmas of weak states: Africa and transnational terrorism in the twenty-first century*. New York: Routledge.

Mitani, J. C., Watts, D. P., & Amsler, S. J. (2010). Lethal intergroup aggression leads to territorial expansion in wild chimpanzees. *Current Biology, 20*(12), 507-508.

Morris, I. (2014). *War! What is it Good For? Conflict and the Progress of Civilization from Primates to Robots*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Patton, G. S. (1990). *The Poems of General George S. Patton, Jr: Lines of Fire*. Prioli, C. A. (Ed.). Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.

Petersen, R. D. (2011). *Western intervention in the Balkans: the strategic use of emotion in conflict*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pitcher, A., Moran, M. H., & Johnston, M. (2009). Rethinking patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism in Africa. *African Studies Review, 52*, 125-156.

Reno, W. (2011). *Warfare in Independent Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reno, W., & Matisek, J. (2018). A New Era of Insurgent Recruitment: Have 'New' Civil Wars changed the Dynamic? *Civil Wars, 20*(3), 358-378.

Sen, A. (2007). *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Stedman, S. J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security, 22*(2), 5-53.

Straus, S. (2012). "Destroy Them to Save Us": Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 24*(4), 544-560.

Tilly, C. (1975). Reflections on the History of European State-Making. In Tilly, C. (Ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*. (pp. 1-83). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Toft, M. D. (2009). *Securing the peace: The durable settlement of civil wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tolstoy, L. (2016 [1869]). *War and Peace*. Uyl, A. (Ed.). Ontario: Devoted Publishing.