

Becoming a Global Power: The American Experience

PLSC 26405 / 36405

Fall 2019

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30am– 10:50 am

Room: Haskell Hall M102

Professor: Austin Carson, Department of Political Science, acarson@uchicago.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-4:00pm (Pick Hall 428). *Sign up for a 15 minute slot at my website:* <https://austinmcarson.com/teaching/>

Course description

This seminar has advanced undergraduates and M.A. students analyze the relationship between war, national security, and American politics. We explore two themes: how military activities have shaped American political institutions and society, and the nature and consequences of the U.S. turn to global hegemony after World War II. Specific topics include the impact of war on presidential power, how formal American empire prompted innovations in governance, the rise of the modern national security state, and the logistics and social consequences of a global role during the Cold War. The course features interdisciplinary readings from across political science and history. Students must complete all readings and actively participate in seminar discussion. Assignments will ask students to analyze scholarly work in the form of a book review as well as engage in close reading and analysis of original primary materials. Doing so will help students understand the history, assumptions, and logics which shaped American hegemony. A final exam will evaluate students' understanding of the course material as a whole.

Books for purchase

Acquire these books as soon as possible. Some may be at the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore but all are available online. Double check for correct editions via the ISBN number.

Angevine, Robert G. *The Railroad and the State: War, Politics, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century America*. Stanford University Press, 2004.

Borgwardt, Elizabeth. *A New Deal for the World*. Harvard University Press, 2007.

Dudziak, Mary L. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2011.

Go, Julian. *Patterns of Empire: The British and American Empires, 1688 to the Present*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Hearden, Patrick J. *Architects of Globalism: Building a New World Order During World War II*. University of Arkansas Press, 2002.

Hogan, Michael J. *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Jensen, Laura. *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Schlesinger, Arthur. *The Imperial Presidency*. The 1989, 1998, or 2004 editions are fine.

Sparrow, Bartholomew H. *The Insular Cases and the Emergence of American Empire*. University Press of Kansas, 2006.

Requirements

Students are expected to attend every session and complete the required readings. All students – undergraduate or graduate – will be graded on the same assignments. Details on each assignment will be provided during the course. The grade will be based on the following:

Seminar participation (20%). Students are expected to regularly contribute to discussion with comments that reflect careful engagement with the readings. Aim for at least one or two high quality contributions per session. Avoid over-participation. I take student discomfort with verbal contributions in a seminar setting seriously. Please meet with me during office hours to discuss strategies/alternatives if you are struggling.

Book review (15%). Students will write a short review of one book on the syllabus that is *not* required reading (or off syllabus, if approved). The review should summarize the book and develop one or more criticisms. Useful examples (reviews of my own book) that blend summary with a set of questions/points the reviewer wants to make are [here](#) and [here](#). Reviews are due Friday, November 1. Up to three pages (excluding any work cited), single-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins.

Close reading essay (15%). Students will be assigned one primary document to analyze in a short essay. The documents will be from American postwar planning about its global military role. Each essay will address three questions. What are the stated and unstated assumptions? What is included and excluded from the scope of possible actions? What rhetorical choices in the document are especially significant? Essays are due Friday, November 22. Up to four pages (excluding any work cited), single-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins.

Final exam (50%). The final exam will be a take-home, open-note essay. I will circulate an essay prompt posing a set of questions that synthesize themes from across the readings. The grade will be primarily based on demonstrating a command of the required readings and the ideas behind them. Secondary but also important: originality of analysis; essay organization; writing clarity. I recommend reviewing this [advice on essay writing](#), especially the sections on organization and thesis. No page limit. Single-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins. Prompt will go out 8am on Monday, December 9; final exam essays are due by 5pm that day.

Professionalism

We will create our own quarter-long intellectual community. Its norms will be collectively generated and honed over time. My goal is for all of us to feel comfortable developing and scrutinizing one another's ideas. To allow this, students must follow basic norms of respectful intellectual exchange. Be professional in all communications. Emails should be thoughtfully composed with normal punctuation and salutations. Comments in class should be respectful of other students. Avoid adopting a confrontational tone. Respectfully disagree by suggesting a different view rather than forcefully contradicting. To create and sustain an open environment, acts of sexual misconduct, which encompass a range of conduct from sexual assault to sexual harassment, will be treated as violations of the standards of our community and unacceptable. Other forms of misconduct based on race, religion, or sexual orientation are equally unacceptable. A new and useful university resource on gender-based misconduct is [here](#).

Email policy

In general, I do not read or respond to student emails until the evening or next morning. On weekends, I often do not read/respond at all. Please do not expect immediate replies.

Late policy

All deadlines are strict. Papers/assignments received late will be dropped one letter grade for each 24 hours past the deadline.

Make-up exam policy

If the course has an exam, students may have to miss the regular exam date because of illness or other excusable reasons. Students may take a make-up exam only after receiving permission from me in writing before the regular exam. To do so, students must submit a request by email to me, any TA, and your college adviser.

Academic integrity

I will strictly follow the University's policy on academic integrity: "It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work." More details on the policy are [here](#).

Disability accommodations

If you need any special accommodations, please provide me with a copy of an Accommodation Determination Letter (provided to you by the Student Disability Services office) as soon as possible so that you may discuss with him/her how your accommodations may be implemented in this course.

Schedule Overview

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Detailed Schedule and Readings

Topic: Course Overview

This week provides an overview of the scope of the course and explains its logistics and assignments. We will also discuss scholarship that provides an overview and conceptual frameworks for thinking about two issues: how war has affected the development of the American state, and how American thinking about its international role has evolved over time.

Suggested readings (no readings required)

The Four Schoolmasters: Review of *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, by Walter Russell Mead. H.W. Brand. The National Interest, No. 66 (Winter 2001/02), pp. 143-148.

Kennedy, David M. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Legacies of World War I Commemorative Issue. *Diplomatic History*, Volume 38, Issue 4, September 2014.

Mayhew, David R. "Wars and American Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 3.3 (2005): 473-493.

Saldin, Robert P. *War, the American State, and Politics Since 1898*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Session 1 (T, October 1): Short lecture on Mayhew. No readings.

Topic: War and (Un)Divided Power

This week reviews scholarship on how war has affected the balance of power in two senses: the federal government vs. the states, and the executive vs. legislative branch. We assess the conventional view that war has been an important propellant for the rise of an “imperial presidency.”

Readings (*required)

- *Bensel, Richard Franklin. *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Edling, Max M. *A Hercules in the Cradle: War, Money, and the American State, 1783-1867*. University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- Howell, William G., Saul P. Jackman, and Jon C. Rogowski. *The Wartime President: Executive Influence and the Nationalizing Politics of Threat*. University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Howell, William G., and Jon C. Pevehouse. *While Dangers Gather: Congressional Checks on Presidential War Powers*. Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Hinckley, Barbara. *Less than Meets the Eye: Foreign Policy Making and the Myth of the Assertive Congress*. University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- *Kriner, Douglas L. *After the Rubicon: Congress, Presidents, and the Politics of Waging War*. University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Polsky, Andrew J. *Elusive Victories: The American Presidency at War*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- *Radiolab episode “[60 Words](#)”
- *Schlesinger, Arthur. *The Imperial Presidency*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2004.

Session 2 (Th, October 3): Schlesinger (1-7)

Session 3 (T, October 8): Bensel (1, 3); Kriner (1, 5); Radiolab episode

Topic: The Military as the State

This week reconceptualizes the U.S. military as an agent of the American state actively participating in institution-building and governance. Scholars are increasingly looking at how the military, War Department, and care for veterans served as early sources of expanded federal administrative capacity.

Readings (*required)

- *Angevine, Robert. "Mapping the Northern Frontier: Canada and the Origins of the US Army's Military Information Division, 1885–1898." *Intelligence and National Security* 16.3 (2001): 121-145.
- Adler, William D., and Andrew J. Polsky. "Building the New American Nation: Economic Development, Public Goods, and the Early US Army." *Political Science Quarterly* 125.1 (2010): 87-110.
- Adler, William D. "State Capacity and Bureaucratic Autonomy in the Early United States: The Case of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers." *Studies in American Political Development* 26.2 (2012): 107-124.
- *Ericson, David F. "The United States Military, State Development, and Slavery in the Early Republic." *Studies in American Political Development* 31.1 (2017): 130-148.
- *Jensen, Laura. *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- *Katznelson, Ira. "Flexible Capacity: The Military and Early American Statebuilding." In *Shaped by War and Trade: International Influences on American Political Development*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Martin Shefter. Princeton University Press (2002). pp. 82–110.
- Rockwell, Stephen J. *Indian Affairs and the Administrative State in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Sledge, Daniel. "War, Tropical Disease, and the Emergence of National Public Health Capacity in the United States." *Studies in American Political Development* 26.2 (2012): 125-162.

Session 4 (Th, October 10): Katznelson; Jensen (1-4)

Session 5 (T, October 15): Ericson; Angevine

Topic: Threats, Federal Power, and the Built Environment

This week focuses on how security threats have influenced the development of the “built environment,” i.e. roads and other fixed material infrastructure. Federal power has often augmented as a result. We will focus on a mechanism of framing: successful infrastructure projects have drawn on a national security lens. This includes threats of war in selling 19th century “internal improvements’ (i.e. canals and rail) as well as threats of nuclear war affecting 20th century debates on the modern interstate highway system.

Readings (*required)

- *Angevine, Robert G. *The Railroad and the State: War, Politics, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century America*. Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Callen, Zachary. "Congress and the Railroads: Federalism, American Political Development, and the Migration of Policy Responsibility." *American Politics Research* 40.2 (2012): 293-326.
- Farish, Matthew. "Disaster and Decentralization: American Cities and the Cold War." *Cultural Geographies* 10.2 (2003): 125-148.
- *Karnes, Thomas L. *Asphalt and Politics: A History of the American Highway System*. McFarland, 2009.
- *Ingram, Tammy. *Dixie Highway: Road Building and the Making of the Modern South, 1900-1930*. UNC Press Books, 2014.
- Hill, Forest Garrett. *Roads, Rails & Waterways: The Army Engineers and Early Transportation*. Greenwood, 1977.
- *Stone, Deborah A. "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas." *Political Science Quarterly* 104.2 (1989): 281-300.
- *Tobin, Kathleen. "The Reduction of Urban Vulnerability: Revisiting 1950s American Suburbanization as Civil Defence." *Cold War History* 2.2 (2002): 1-32.

Session 6 (Th, October 17): Stone; Angevine (Intro, 3, 4, 6)

Session 7 (T, October 22): Karnes (4-5); Ingram (Intro, 3); Tobin

Topic: American Empire and Political Development

Our understanding of America's political development typically builds on events within its sovereign borders. Recent work has shifted to analyzing American state-making in its imperial periphery. Depending on one's definition of "empire," this can include U.S. overseas direct colonial possessions (i.e. the Philippines), occupied territories during/after war (i.e. Japan after World War II), and the administration of Native American "reservations." We review how such activities have prompted experimentation in the American approach to governance.

Readings (*required)

- *Go, Julian. *Patterns of Empire: The British and American Empires, 1688 to the Present*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Immerwahr, Daniel. *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States*. Random House, 2019.
- McCoy, Alfred W. *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2009.
- *McCoy, Alfred W., and Francisco A. Scarano, eds. *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2009.
- *Moore, Colin D. *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*. Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- *Sparrow, Bartholomew H. *The Insular Cases and the Emergence of American Empire*. University Press of Kansas, 2006.
- Tyrrell, Ian, and Jay Sexton, eds. *Empire's Twin: US Anti-imperialism from the Founding Era to the Age of Terrorism*. Cornell University Press, 2015.

Session 8 (Th, October 24): Sparrow (Intro, 4, 7, 8); Go (Intro)

Session 9 (T, October 29): Go (Chapter 2); Moore (1, 4)

Session 10 (Th, October 31): McCoy and Scarano (Intros to Medicine & Policing; Foster; Salman; Sutter)

****Book reviews due Friday, November 1****

Topic: Governing a Global Role

This week focuses on a critical part of a permanent global military posture: the development of new national security institutions. We read accounts of the origins of acronyms we now take for granted: the JCS, the CIA, the NSC. We also assess how a large peacetime military altered domestic politics in the United States by creating constituencies economically dependent on, and strongly in favor of, a particular model of national defense.

Readings (*required)

- *Friedberg, Aaron L. *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-statism and its Cold War Grand Strategy*. Princeton University Press, 2012.
- *Hogan, Michael J. *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Mabee, Bryan. "Historical Institutionalism and Foreign Policy Analysis: The Origins of the National Security Council Revisited." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7.1 (2010): 27-44.
- Sander, Alfred D. "Truman and the National Security Council: 1945-1947." *The Journal of American History* (1972): 369-388.
- Sparrow, Bartholomew H. *From the Outside In: World War II and the American State*. Princeton University Press, 1996.
- *Thorpe, Rebecca U. *The American Warfare State: The Domestic Politics of Military Spending*. University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- *Zegart, Amy B. *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*. Stanford University Press, 2000.

Session 11 (T, November 5): Hogan (1, 2, 6 (III-V), 7, 9); Zegart (Intro, 2)

Session 12 (Th, November 7): Friedberg (1, 5); Thorpe (1, 3, 4)

Topic: Envisioning and Building a Global Role

This week focuses on early planning for the modern American global military presence. We carefully review how elite American leaders viewed the future U.S. global role and how, in practice, a new global role could be given form. We focus specifically on debates during and immediately following World War II, which featured a rare level of detailed and long-term strategic planning.

Readings (*required)

- *Borgwardt, Elizabeth. *A New Deal for the World*. Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Converse III, Elliott V. *Circling the Earth: United States Plans for a Postwar Overseas Military Base System, 1942-1948*. Air University Maxwell, 2005.
- Davis, Sasha. "The US Military Base Network and Contemporary Colonialism: Power Projection, Resistance and the Quest for Operational Unilateralism." *Political Geography* 30.4 (2011): 215-224.
- Duke, Simon. *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe*. Oxford University Press, 1989.
- *Hearden, Patrick J. *Architects of Globalism: Building a New World Order During World War II*. University of Arkansas Press, 2002.
- *Leffler, Melvyn P. "The American Conception of National Security and the Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-48." *The American Historical Review* (1984): 346-381.
- Rosenboim, Or. *The Emergence of Globalism: Visions of World Order in Britain and the United States, 1939-1950*. Princeton University Press, 2017.
- Sandars, Christopher T. *America's Overseas Garrisons: The Leasehold Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Sherry, Michael. *Preparing for the Next War: American Plans for Postwar Defense, 1941-45*. Yale University Press, 1977.
- Stoler, Mark A. "From Continentalism to Globalism: General Stanley D. Embick, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, and the Military View of American National Policy during the Second World War." *Diplomatic History* 6.3 (1982): 303-321.
- *Friedman, Hal M. *Creating an American Lake: United States Imperialism and Strategic Security in the Pacific Basin, 1945-1947*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.
- *Wertheim, Stephen. "Instrumental Internationalism: The American Origins of the United Nations, 1940-3." *Journal of Contemporary History* 54.2 (2019): 265-283.

Session 13 (T, November 12): Hearden (Preface, Intro, 2, 7); Borgwardt (Intro, 2, 8)

Session 14 (Th, November 14): Wertheim; Go (Chapter 4); Hearden (Chapter 8)

Session 15 (T, November 19): Guest instructor: Matthew Conklin. Details TBD

Session 16 (Th, November 21): Leffler; Friedman (Intro, 1, 4)

****Close reading essays due Friday, November 22****

Topic: Race and a Global Role

What are the spillover effects of a global military role in the United States? This week focuses on one particular domain: race in America. Suggested readings assess how wars in general have affected definitions of race, policies regarding racial discrimination, and societal views of racial inclusion and identity. We will read about how the American global role after World War II, and its contest with the Soviet communism, influenced the domestic politics of race in the United States.

Readings (*required)

*Dudziak, Mary L. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2011.

Frymer, Paul. *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

Kryder, Daniel. *Divided Arsenal: Race and the American State During World War II*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.

King, Desmond S., and Rogers M. Smith. "Racial Orders in American Political Development." *American political science review* 99.1 (2005): 75-92.

Parker, Christopher S. *Fighting for democracy: Black veterans and the struggle against white supremacy in the postwar South*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

Session 17 (T, November 26): Dudziak (all)

Session 18 (Th, November 28): *No class – Thanksgiving Day*

Topic: The Nuclear Shield and its Consequences

This week focuses on an issue of interest that has been critical to its global military posture: the American nuclear weapons arsenal. We will learn about the obscure but expansive infrastructure created to research, design, test, and stock the nuclear arsenal. We will read studies of its impact on a variety of areas of American politics and life, including regional economies, political party identification, and racial integration.

Readings (*required)

Brown, Kathryn L. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2013.

*Findlay, John M., and Bruce W. Hevly. *Atomic Frontier Days: Hanford and the American West*. University of Washington Press, 2011.

*Frederickson, Kari. *Cold War Dixie: Militarization and Modernization in the American South*. University of Georgia Press, 2013.

*Freeman, Lindsey A. *Longing for the Bomb: Oak Ridge and Atomic Nostalgia*. UNC Press Books, 2015.

Gusterson, Hugh. *Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War*. University of California Press, 1996.

Masco, Joseph. *The Nuclear Borderlands: The Manhattan Project in Post-Cold War New Mexico*. Princeton University Press, 2006.

Oakes, Guy. *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1995.

Sparrow, James T. "Behind the Atomic Curtain: School Desegregation and Territoriality in the Early Cold War." *The Tocqueville Review/La revue Tocqueville* 33.2 (2012): 115-139.

Session 19 (T, December 3): Frederickson (Intro, 1, 5); Findlay and Hevly (Chapter 1); Freeman (Chapter 1, 2)

Session 20 (Th, December 5): *Optional reading period session, topic(s) TBD*

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****Final exam due Monday December 9 by 5 pm****

Send to acarson@uchicago.edu