

US MILITARY POWER

17.482-3 / STS 450J/STS 071J

Tuesdays, 1.00pm-3.00 pm

Room E25-117

Discussion sections: TBA

Professor Posen, office in E38-634

Professor Postol, office in E38-632

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Overview

The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with the missions, capabilities, and costs of the largely non-nuclear forces that make up the bulk of the US military establishment. The course will also introduce the student to basic techniques for the assessment of relative military capabilities between adversaries in given theaters of military action. Central to the course will be an examination of historical cases of military action that shed light on current defense issues.

Students will be evaluated on the basis of one paper (60%) and a final exam (30%). The paper will consist of an analysis of a current conventional forces problem. The paper will be due one week before the last day of class. This means that you should begin working on the paper at the beginning of the semester. Some eligible topics are listed at the end of this syllabus. There will be an undergraduate discussion section (10%). There will be a graduate discussion section. Attendance for the discussion section and lectures is mandatory.

The final exam is an open note, sit-down exam during the examination period. Study questions will be distributed before the exam. These questions will be closely related but not identical to those asked on the actual exam. The TA will conduct a review session before the exam. The purpose of the exercise is to encourage one last overall review of the main points of the semester. Though the structure appears friendly, it is not a piece of cake.

Required reading consists of a xeroxed collection of class notes which can be purchased at Graphic Arts in the basement of E51 (Sloan Bldg.), delineated as "CN" in the syllabus.

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Topic List

February 5	Introduction: The Past, Present and Future of the U.S. Force Structure
February 12[c]	US Grand Strategy
February 19	Off
February 26	The Fundamentals of Campaign Analysis
March 5	The Simple Arithmetic of Ground Combat[Postol]
March 12[c]	A Case from the Bad Old Days: The Battle of the Bulge
March 19	The History and Role of Airpower
March 26	Off (spring break)
April 2	Accuracy, Lethality and Tactics[Postol]
April 9[c]	Power Projection: The US Navy, the USMC, Airlift, and Airborne
April 16	Off
April 23	Search: Finding the Evasive[Postol]
April 30	"Humanitarian Military Intervention" The War for Kosovo
May 7 [c]	Combined Arms Warfare in Desert Storm
May 14	The Nuclear Setting of Conventional Forces[Postol]

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Week 1, Feb. 5 - Introduction: The Past, Present and Future of the U.S. Force Structure

Les Aspin, The Bottom Up Review: Forces for a New Era , September 1, 1993 (Office of the Secretary of Defense) CN

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, memo: "Four Options for a Defense that Works," and article: "An Approach to Sizing American Conventional Forces for the Post-Soviet Era" CN

Michael O'Hanlon, How to Be a Cheap Hawk, Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-47 (Brookings: Washington DC, 1998) CN

US Congress, Congressional Budget Office, Budgeting for Defense: Maintaining Today's Forces, A CBO Study, September 2000, "Summary," pp.vii-xivCN

Annual Defense Department Report 2001 , Chapter 5, "Conventional Forces," pp. 49-88 CN

Week 2, Feb. 12 - US Grand Strategy

Barry R. Posen and Andrew Ross, "Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Vol 21, No. 3 (Winter 1996-97), pp. 5-53. CN

Quadrennial Defense Review, 2001, pp. 1-27 CN



Week 3- Feb. 19- OFF(Monday schedule of classes to be held)

Week 4, Feb 26 - The Fundamentals of Campaign Analysis

John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," pp.139-175. CN

House Armed Services Committee, "Soviet Readiness for War: Assessing One of the Major Sources of East-West Instability," 1988, pp. 1-17. CN

Barry R. Posen, "The Balance of Ground Forces on the Central Front," Chapter 3, from Inadvertent Escalation, pp. 68-128. CN

For a critique of this literature students should read Eliot Cohen, "Toward Better Net Assessment," pp. 176-215. CN

For responses to this critique, and Cohen's defense, you may wish to review the "Correspondence" in *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 4, (Spring 1989). CN

Recommended:

Michael O'Hanlon, "Stopping a North Korean Invasion: Why Defending S. Korea is Easier than the Pentagon Thinks," 22/4 *International Security*, (Spring 1998) pp. 135-170. CN

Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, Stephen Larrabee, "What will NATO enlargement Cost?" *Survival*, vol. 38, no. 3, Autumn 1996, pp. 5-26. CN

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Week 5, March 5 - The Simple Arithmetic of Ground Combat (Postol)

William W. Kaufmann, "Nonnuclear Deterrence in Central Europe," and Appendix, "The Arithmetic of Force Planning," from Steinbruner, ed. Alliance Security and the No-First-Use Question, pp. 43-44, 51-79, 208-216. CN

Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, "A Common Misapplication of the Lanchester Square Law," *International Security*, Summer, 1987, pp. 135-139. CN

John W. R. Lepingwell, "The Laws of Combat? Lanchester Reexamined," *International Security*, Summer, 1987, pp. 89-127. CN

Students interested in an alternative model may wish to consult Joshua Epstein, Strategy and Force Planning, (Brookings Institution: 1987)

Week 6 - March 12- A Case from the Bad Old Days: The Battle of the Bulge

Hugh Cole, The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge, (Washington DC: US Army, 1994) pp. 52, 649-660, 685-686. CN

Charles B. MacDonald, A Time for Trumpets, Chapters 6,12,13,14., page 629 CN

Recommended Reading:

Charles MacDonald, A Time for Trumpets (NY: William Morrow, 1985) is recommended in its entirety for those interested in ground warfare when it does not go entirely right. Alternatively, students may wish to review Trevor Dupuy, Hitler's Last Gamble, The Battle of the Bulge, (NY: HarperCollins, 1996).

Week 7, March 19- The History and Role of Airpower

Robert Pape, "Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War," *International Security*, Fall, 1990. CN

Earl Tiford, Jr., "It Was a Loser," pp. 215-270, Chapter 5, from his book, Setup. CN (I recommend the entire book; it is available for a reasonable price from the US Government Printing Office.)

W.A. Jacobs, "The Battle for France, 1944," from Close Air Support, Benjamin Franklin Cooling, Editor, Washington, DC: US Air Force (US Government Printing Office) 1990, pp. 237-293. CN

E. Cohen and T. Keaney, Chapter 3, "What did the Air Campaign Accomplish?," (GWAPS) pp. 55-119. CN -- **located in part 2 of the course reader** (with readings from week 14)

Week 8 - March 26 - Spring Break – no class

Week 9, April 2 - Accuracy, Lethality, and Tactics (Postol)

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Week 10, April 9- Power Projection: The US Navy, the US Marine Corps, Army "Light Forces," and Lift (A Theory of Political Magnetism)

Karl Lautenschlager, "Technology and the Evolution of Naval Warfare," pp. 173-221, CN, from the reader Ed. by S. Miller and S. Van Evera, Naval Strategy and National Security, (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1988), Those interested in naval warfare or doing papers on the subject will profit from an examination of this book.

Michael O'Hanlon, "Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan," *International Security* (Fall 2000), pp. 51-86. CN

Week 11, April 16 - Patriot's Day vacation – no class

Week 12, April 23- Search: Finding the Evasive (Postol)

Richard L. Garwin, "Will Strategic Submarines Be Vulnerable," *International Security*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Fall 1983), pp. CN

Karl Lautenschlager, "The Submarine in Naval Warfare," *International Security*, vol. 11, no. 3 (Winter 1986-87), pp. CN
[both of the preceding can also be found in the reader Ed. by S. Miller and S. Van Evera, Naval Strategy and National Security,

"Background Briefing on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles," DOD, October 31, 2001, pp. 1-19
CN

See also Eric Labs, *Options for Enhancing the Dept. of Defense's Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Programs*, Congressional Budget Office, September 1998, at www.cbo.gov

Association of the US Army, "The US Army in Operation Desert Storm," pp. i-26. CN

US Army, Army Focus 1991, "Operation Desert Storm," pp.20-26 CN

Week 13, April 30 - "Humanitarian Military Intervention," :The War for Kosovo

Treaty on the Prevention of Genocide

International Refugee Convention

Adam Roberts, "NATO's 'Humanitarian War' Over Kosovo," *Survival*, (Autumn 1999), pp. 102-123. CN

Barry R. Posen, "The War for Kosovo, Serbia's Political-Military Strategy," *International Security*, (Spring 2000), pp. 39-84. CN

Secretary of Defense William Cohen and CJSC Hugh Shelton, "Joint Statement on the Kosovo After Action Review," October 14, 1999 <http://www.defenselink.mil> CN

Timothy L. Thomas, "Kosovo and the Current Myth of Information Superiority," *Parameters* (Spring 2000), pp. 13-29. CN

James T. Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters* (Winter 1995-96), pp. 59-69 CN



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Shashi Tharoor, "Should UN Peacekeeping Go Back to Basics?" *Survival* 37-4 (Winter 1995-96), pp. 52-64. CN

John Mearsheimer and Robert Pape, "The Answer, A partition plan for Bosnia," The New Republic, June 14, 1993, pp. 22-28. CN

Recommended:

Visit the website set up by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* based on a series of stories by Mark Bowden about the US military intervention in Somalia in 1993 <http://www.blackhawkdown.com>. Read the book, available in paperback, Mark Bowden, Black Hawk Down (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999)

Week 14 - May 7 - Combined Arms Warfare in Desert Storm

Gen. Bernard Trainor (USMC ret'd) and Michael Gordon, The Generals' War, chapters 18-20. CN

House Armed Services Committee, "Intelligence Successes and Failures in Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm," August 1993, pp. 1-45. CN

John Mueller, "The Perfect Enemy: Assessing the Gulf War," *Security Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1 (Autumn 1995) pp. 77-117. CN

Lessons of the War?:

Stephen Biddle, "Victory Misunderstood: What the Gulf War Tells Us about the Future of Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Fall 1996) pp. 139-179. CN

Eliot Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs*, 75-2, March-April 1996, pp. 37-54. CN

Daryl Press, "Lessons from Ground Combat in the Gulf," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997) pp. 137-146. CN

Daryl Press, "The Myth of Air Power in the Persian Gulf War and the Future of Warfare," *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2001), pp. 5-44. CN

Thomas A. Keaney, "The Linkage of Air and Ground Power in the Future of Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997) pp. 147-150. CN

Thomas G. Mahnken and Barry D. Watts, "What the Gulf War Can (and Cannot) tell Us about the Future of Warfare," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997) pp. 151-162. CN

Stephen Biddle, "The Gulf War Debate Redux" *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 163-174. CN

Important Desert Storm Books:

Rick Atkinson, Crusade

E. Cohen and T. Keaney, Gulf War Airpower Survey Summary Report (GWAPS)

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US News Staff, Triumph Without Victory,
(These are moderately detailed overviews of the whole war; see also various participant memoirs.)

Week 15 - May 14 -The Nuclear Setting of Conventional Forces

George W. Rathjens and Marvin M. Miller, "Nuclear Proliferation After the Cold War," *Technology Review*, Aug/Sep 1991. CN

Kenneth Waltz, "Toward Nuclear Peace," in The Use of Force: International Politics and Foreign Policy, Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz, eds., 1983, pp. 573-601. CN

Lewis Dunn, "Nuclear Proliferation and World Politics," in American Defense Policy, 5th ed., 1982, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 447-455. CN

Joachim Krause, "Proliferation Risks and their Strategic Relevance: What role for NATO?" *Survival*, Summer 1995, pp. 135-148. CN

Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Proliferation: Threat and Response", January 2001, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/ptr20010110.pdf> [page numbers to be announced]

Thomas L. McNaugher, "Ballistic Missiles and Chemical Weapons: The Legacy of the Iran-Iraq War," *International Security*, Fall 1990, pp. 5-34. CN

Suggested Paper Topics (If you do not like these, suggest another!)

The following list of topics was devised to develop your ability to analyze non-nuclear military competitions. Not all of these topics narrowly concern US military forces, but they all bear on future US military planning.

WARNING: These are complex tasks of research and analysis. If you do not know much about Dewey and Hayden Libraries, now is the time to learn.

You should discuss your paper topic with your TA in the early part of the term. A short proposal of a potential paper topic (or topics if you are deciding between a few) will be due in class on February 26. A preliminary outline and research plan will be due in class on March 12. A more comprehensive outline will be due in class on April 2. The final paper will be due in class on May 7.

Potential US contingencies:

Assess the air and ground campaigns that would attend a clash of arms on the Korean Peninsula. What might be the military objectives of each side? Could they achieve them? How might the fighting be terminated? Caution: Several analyses of a straightforward N. Korean attack on S. Korea have been published. One is in the syllabus. Please do not replicate these analyses. Look for a piece of the puzzle that has received insufficient attention, in your judgment.

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In 1993 there was both a war and a genocide in Rwanda. At the time, some advocated military intervention. That intervention did not occur. On a recent trip to Africa President William Clinton promised that this kind of thing would never be allowed to happen again. Some believe, however, that the political conditions in that part of Africa are ripe for a re-occurrence, especially in Rwanda and Burundi. Analyze a possible intervention to prevent or stop a campaign of genocide.

In 1995 the Bosnian town of Srebrenica, nominally under the protection of a small force of UN troops, was taken by Serb forces who had besieged the town for some time. Several thousand people were subsequently murdered by the Serbs. It has recently been reported that the French considered some kind of military rescue operation to break the siege. The contemplated operation would have involved infantry landed close to the town by parachute or helicopter. The British were apparently asked to assist. Assess whether or not, at that time, Britain and France could have mounted such an operation with a reasonable probability of success. What would the operation have looked like? What kinds of forces might have been necessary to have a reasonable probability of success? Did the French and British then have sufficient forces?

During a recent crisis in the Taiwan Strait it became apparent that the conventional wisdom among American defense experts is that China does not have sufficient military capability to conquer Taiwan. Is the conventional wisdom well founded? If so, is Taiwan's present security vis-a-vis China likely to erode in the foreseeable future? Alternatively, what are the current and future threats to Taiwan from a Chinese military blockade, or from a Chinese campaign of harassment, based on persistent conventional ballistic missile attacks.?

When the Coalition launched the ground offensive during Desert Storm the Iraqis in and around Kuwait City fled north toward Iraq. Suppose that the Iraqi forces had decided to stay in Kuwait City and fight. What number of US ground forces would have been required to conquer the city? How long might it have taken? Estimate the number of US casualties.

The next move in the US Counterterrorism War may be an invasion of Iraq. How might this best be accomplished? How many forces, of what kind, would be necessary? What might be the costs of such an invasion? What are some of the possible "failure modes?" Be sure to make reasonable political assumptions.

Suppose NATO had been forced to wage a ground campaign to take Kosovo from the Serbs in 1999. What might that campaign have looked like? What kinds of forces would NATO have needed to assure a reasonable probability of success. What might it have cost in terms of NATO, Serb, and Kosovar Albanian lives. What might have been the fate of the infrastructure of Kosovo during such a battle? You may assume, for purposes of analysis, that the Serbs were willing to fight, but you may constrain them to the forces now known to have been present in Kosovo and immediately across the border in Serbia.

Pick a potential case of assertive counter-proliferation and assess the feasibility of the project. For example, should the current accord by which North Korea promises to dismantle its nascent nuclear weapons capability in exchange for light water reactors collapse, could the US and its allies employ military force for the restricted purpose of eliminating this capability? (You could examine Iraq, Iran, or Libya if you wished.) You could also conduct this analysis from the perspective of another country. For example you might put yourself in the position of an Indian or Pakistani military planner trying to develop and assess the feasibility of such a campaign vs one another.

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Review Operation Allied Force, the recent NATO operation against Serbia prompted by the civil war in Kosovo. Many government officials on both sides of the Atlantic have suggested that the operation demonstrates the woeful backwardness of European military forces. What evidence is there to support this proposition. How backward do the Europeans seem to be. In what areas. Do current European defense programs hold much promise of remedying the inadequacies? When?

Devise and defend a method to determine the size of the required US attack submarine force. What size force does that method suggest?

Assess the capability of Iran to invade Iraq and then Kuwait. Assume a US effort to thwart the Iranian effort. Conduct that analysis on the basis of current capabilities. Discuss what the Iranian military would have to do over the next five years to make itself more competitive for this operation..

Imagine that the efforts by the government of Columbia to suppress the insurgent forces in the country who protect and profit from the cocaine trade do not succeed. Imagine further that the war begins to go against the government, and the US faces a serious risk of an entire country run by a political movement entirely sympathetic to the cocaine traffickers. The US government begins to contemplate the idea of direct military intervention on the side of the government of Columbia to defeat the insurgents. What kind of military force, of what size, for how long, might it take for the US to accomplish this mission, in cooperation with the military and police forces of Columbia.

Assess the existing balance of military power between any two of the major states on the Balkan peninsula: for example Croatia vs Serbia, or Croatia vs Bosnia, or Bosnia vs Serbia (plus the remnants of the Bosnian Serb Army.) assuming no outside intervention to assist any of the parties. Does your analysis suggest that western troops can safely be withdrawn from the region?

Non-US Contingencies:

What is the security value of the West Bank to the state of Israel? Presuming there is some value, what political-military arrangements would permit a withdrawal? What might be the US role in such arrangements? (Alternatively, you may answer this question with reference to the Golan Heights.)

Evaluate the military balance in South Asia (India and Pakistan). What conventional military pressures, if any, are fueling the nuclear arms race on the subcontinent? Could conventional arms control ease these pressures?

Asian countries clearly fear the military potential of Japan. Assess Japanese military capabilities today. Do not merely enumerate holdings of weapons systems. Pick a notional campaign in Asia, and assess Japan's independent capability in that campaign.

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Note, the following examples are not chosen for their likelihood, but for their analytic utility. Examples:

- A Japanese invasion of S. Korea
- A Japanese blockade of S. Korea
- A Japanese effort to blockade China's seaborne trade.
- A Japanese effort to defend itself, by itself, from a dedicated Chinese submarine campaign against Japanese merchant shipping
- Japan's vulnerability to a dedicated Chinese conventional ballistic missile attack. (Note: Given that Japan has no ballistic missile defense capability, and will not have one anytime soon, this analysis would involve first an assessment of China's plausible conventional missile capability, and then an assessment of the inherent vulnerability of Japan's economic infrastructure, and its civil defense capability.).
- A Japanese campaign to establish naval superiority in Indonesia's home waters.

Assess the course of a possible war between Syria and Turkey.