



Announcements



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## Announcements

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### Course Summary

Posted on: Wednesday, April 27, 2016 4:41:43 PM EDT

#### PCS 2020-001 - HI SD2510 - PS 2440

#### Science Technology and War

Fall Semester 2016    Mon-Wed 11:45 AM – 1:35 PM    121 Old Main – WSU Main Campus

**TEXTS:**    “Soul of the Sword” Robert O’Connell [OC]

“Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism”, James Forest and Russell Howards [FH]

#### COURSE SUMMARY

Most current American college students do not like or feel comfortable with the concept or actuality of war. Aside from being personally dangerous, it is disruptive of everything and everyone that they cherish and depend upon. However, this was not always so. Through much of human history, war was considered a very positive activity for and by significant portions of society. It gave young men the possibility of adventure and strenuous physical activity with the chance of public recognition as a hero, and, for some, the chance of a “glorious death” rather than the slow decline of aging and senility. For young women, it provided the opportunity for lusty lovers without the necessity of having to put up with them for extended periods of time. And for the “powers that be” in the society, it provided the occasion for extending their power and expanding their wealth. War required ever larger groups of people, leading from inter-family conflict to tribal warfare to the growth and recognition of “peoplehood”, to, finally, the creation of the present system of nation states.

In its search for ever better weapons for offense and defense, and the means to deploy them (such as mobility and communication tools), war led to new materials and new technologies. These new technologies, and the sciences developed to understand and improve them, had profound impacts upon societies, both during wartime and in the occasional periods of non-war. These technologies made us and our societies what we are today. In the past, war had winners and losers – with some “draws”. There were always survivors, some of whom were significantly better-off after the war. But as opposing systems or nations grew ever larger and killing technologies ever more efficient, it became apparent that modern full-scale war would leave no survivors. That is where we are today: all-out international

Posted by: Alvin Saperstein  
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nuclear war would be mutual suicide.

However, recognition of the potential for international suicide has not led to the abolition of war as a human activity. Instead, its scale has changed. In the past centuries, wars involved ever larger and more powerful units – from tribes with slings and arrows to alliances of nations brandishing nuclear weapons. Backing away from the possibility of mutual annihilation the peoples of the world, though still keeping and improving the tools of mutual suicide, have adopted two -not new- means of violently attempting to settle grievances.

(1) Keep war between nations confined to small non-nuclear states; e.g., the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, the Iran-Iraq war.

(2) Have non-state entities engage in violent conflict; i.e., sub-groups of people – in one or more nations – fight similar sub-groups – within the same or other nations – even their own governments. Such strife used to be called “civil war”; it is now more commonly referred to as “terrorism”.

Thus, in the latter case, we have come full circle from pre-historic times to today; from inter-tribe conflict to inter-sect bloodletting. The questions we now all face is how to keep the advantages that modern science and technology have given to the peoples of the world while protecting them from the potential of global or local annihilation.

## Course procedures

Posted on: Monday, April 25, 2016 4:15:43 PM EDT

### COURSE PROCEDURES

1. Read the materials assigned in the syllabus **before each class** and be prepared to discuss the topics informally. Occasionally, the Course Blackboard site will also contain additional readings, or links to additional reading which should serve to enhance the class discussion.
2. There will be no formal lectures. Course attendance and participation will be counted towards your grade. (10%).
3. Each week, on the Course Blackboard site, I will post several questions related to that week's readings. Take one question and answer it concisely but completely (length at least one single-space typed page or equivalent.) I will collect the papers on Mondays, grade and return them on Wednesdays. I will only count the 10 highest grades of the papers. (50%)
4. There will be an Essay-type Mid-term (20%) and an Essay-type Final exam (20%).

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**Syllabus: PCS 2020-001 – HIS 2510 - PS 2440 – PHY 2020**

**Science Technology and War**

**Fall Semester 2016**

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| <b>WEEK</b> | <b>DATE</b> | <b>TOPIC</b>                                      | <b>READINGS BEFORE CLASS</b> |
|-------------|-------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1           | W 8/31      | <b>INTRODUCTORY TALK</b>                          | -----                        |
|             | W 9/7       | Animal and Early Human Conflict                   | OC: 1, 2                     |
| 2           | M 9/12      | <i>The Rise of Kings and “Noble” Wars</i>         | OC: 3, 4                     |
|             | W 9/14      | Imperial War on Land and Sea                      | OC: 5, 6                     |
| 3           | M 9/19      | <i>Arrival of the Gun</i>                         | OC: 7                        |
|             | W 9/21      | Guns at Sea                                       | OC: 8                        |
| 4           | M 9/26      | <i>The State and Ritualization of War</i>         | OC: 9                        |
|             | W 9/28      | War and the Industrial Revolution                 | OC: 10                       |
| 5           | M 10/3      | <i>War Technology on Land and Sea</i>             | OC: 11,12                    |
|             | W 10/5      | Mechanized Killing – WW I                         | OC: 13                       |
| 6           | M 10/10     | <i>Sci-tech Goes to War – WW II</i>               | OC: 14                       |
|             | W 10/12     | The Cold War                                      | OC:15, Epilogue              |
| 7           | M 10/17     | <b>SUMMARY DISCUSSION</b>                         |                              |
|             | W 10/19     | <b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>                              |                              |
| 8           | M 10/24     | <i>War Shifts from Inter-Nation to Inter-Idea</i> | FH: pp. 1-37                 |
|             | W 10/26     | Modern Terrorism                                  | FH: pp. 39-84                |
| 9           | M 10/31     | <i>Terrorist Tools - Chemical</i>                 | FH: pp. 85-122, 291-299      |
|             | W 11/2      | Terrorist Tools - Biological                      | FH: pp. 123-177              |
| 10          | M 11/7      | <i>Terrorist Tools - Radiological</i>             | FH: 179-199, 270-290         |
|             | W 11/9      | Terrorist Tools - Nuclear                         | FH: 201-235                  |
| 11          | M 11/14     | <i>Non-national Nuclear Bombs ?</i>               | FH:236-254, 256-269          |
|             | W 11/16     | Vulnerability - Infrastructure                    | FH: 301-365                  |
| 12          | M 11/21     | <i>Vulnerability – Food and Energy</i>            | FH: 365-411                  |
|             | M 11/28     | <i>Preventing Attacks</i>                         | FH: 411-506                  |
| 13          | W 11/30     | Responding to Attacks                             | FH: 506-617                  |
|             | M 12/5      | <i>Case Studies</i>                               | FH: 617-701                  |
| 14          | W 12/7      | Anticipating the Future                           | FH: 701-767                  |
|             | M 12/12     | <b>SUMMARY DISCUSSION</b>                         |                              |
|             |             | <b>[FINAL DURING EXAM WEEK]</b>                   |                              |