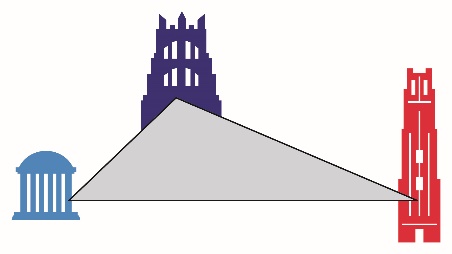
****

**TISS Eighteenth Annual New Faces Conference – 8 September 2017**

**ABSTRACTS**

* *Dissertation Abstracts are noted first*
* *Abstracts of Papers presented at conference are noted second, where applicable*

*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**

Presenter: Joshua Kyle Akers, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, History

**Straddling the Threshold of Two Worlds: Soldiers’ Culture in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, 1965-1975.**

This dissertation explores how American soldiers used American mass culture to make sense of their experiences and to forge a shared culture during the Vietnam War. Throughout the war, soldiers remained acutely engaged with American consumer culture, which was accessible to an extraordinary degree in Vietnam. The nature of the troop forces in Vietnam contributed to this ongoing and intimate engagement with American mass culture. That most soldiers came into the service for a brief period, many through the draft, and had no intention of making a career in military service only exacerbated the tendency for cultural rupture and change on the home front to influence soldiers’ behavior in war. Each new cohort of replacements brought with them a ‘cultural inventory’ of ideas about, among other things, the civil rights movement, the counterculture, politics, and a perception of what military service meant. While soldiers brought these ideas with them to Vietnam, the U.S. Army purposefully outfitted military bases with the trappings of American mass consumer culture that provided various cultural mediums for reinforcing or challenging what soldiers’ believed about the war and the meaning of citizenship and military service. Vietnam became a place where soldiers renegotiated their place amid a host of political and social currents during the Sixties.

Presenter: Kathryn Alexander, Duke University, Political Science

**Fully Committed? Religiously Committed State Populations and Foreign Policy Formulation**

This dissertation argues that the higher the level of religious commitment within a state’s population—that is, the higher the level of importance assigned by citizens to religious identities and ideas—the greater will be that state’s propensity for initiating conflict. The project follows a three-article model and contains three interlocking empirical studies, each speaking to religion’s role in conditioning interstate conflict and connections between domestic culture and global politics. The first article uses a case study of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s tenure as prime minister and president of Turkey to build a theory connecting popular religious commitment to state conflict behaviors. Drawing on insights from the literatures on audience costs, diversionary war, and elite cues, the theory posits that in highly religious societies, leaders compete with political challengers for the support of their religious citizens and are incentivized to publicly spiritualize foreign threats in hopes of benefitting from “rally-round-the-sacred-symbol” effects. Yet, by framing foreign affairs as having implications beyond the material world, leaders encounter political costs for failing to adequately confront threats, increasing the likelihood that they will follow through on bellicose rhetoric. The second article employs a large-*N* statistical study to establish a cross-national connection between higher population proportions of religiously committed citizens and higher probabilities that states will initiate conflict against others, corroborating the system-level expectations of the first article’s theory. The third article uses an original survey experiment to test the micro-foundations of the religious signaling dynamics that play a key role in the theory. It shows how elites can successfully spiritualize military actions, using targeted religious rhetoric, to garner the support of religiously committed individuals.

**Religiosity and Bellicosity: The Impact of Religious Commitment on Interstate Conflict**

Are states with more religiously committed citizens more likely to initiate conflict than states with less committed populations? This paper builds upon findings within the American Politics literature that link individuals’ levels of religious commitment to their attitudes about foreign policy and tests whether the implications of these findings have cross-national applicability and explanatory power for interstate conflict. Using a novel, robust measure of the proportion of a state’s population that is religiously committed and both monadic and dyadic statistical models, the analysis finds widespread connections between religious commitment and bellicose state behaviors. The results show that states with higher levels of religious commitment within their populations demonstrate higher overall propensities for initiating conflict with other states. This relationship is most severe when both states in a dyad have high levels of religious commitment, while in-group/out-group identity dynamics do not appear to exacerbate religious commitment’s impact. This project advances knowledge about both the role of religion in international relations and conditions for interstate conflict, emphasizing the relevance of domestic cultural factors to global politics.

Presenter: Cindy Ewing, Yale University, History

**Experiments in Peace: Asian Neutralism, Human Rights, and the Transformation of the United Nations, 1946-1966**

This dissertation examines how the neutral states of the Third World shaped the development of international human rights during the Cold War. In the 1940s and 1950s, newly independent states in South and Southeast Asia organized themselves into an informal alliance based on a common posture of resistance to security alliances. These neutralist leaders then identified the United Nations as a site for building prestige, finding coalition partners, and securing their independence from foreign intervention. A core argument of this dissertation is that one of the overlooked legacies of this transnational project was the imprinting of Third World concerns into the International Bill of Human Rights, the textual foundations of the international human rights system. Far from disengaged, Third World leaders imported their concerns into the drafting of human rights instruments, transforming its conceptual premises to include the collective right to self- determination and to force the United Nations’ participation in decolonization. By reconceptualizing the role of the Third World in the Cold War, this dissertation offers the first full length study of the International Bill of Human Rights from a global perspective across the twenty years of its creation, from 1946 to 1966. It draws on archival sources from across ten countries in five languages to advance our historical knowledge of the Third World and its impact on international relations during the Cold War.

Presenter: Michael Joseph, The George Washington University, Political Science – International Relations

**More Talk, Less Action: Why Costless Diplomacy Works During Power Transition**

Why do declining powers take rising powers' cheap claims about limited intentions seriously? Power transitions are a tough test of cheap-talk because the incentive to misrepresent drives rising powers to understate, not overstate, intentions. Even aggressive types promise their aims are limited, and these promises cannot be validated for years. Using a formal model, Michael Joseph argues that rising powers credibly signal their long-term intentions by tying demands for specific concessions (e.g., Taiwan) to underlying principles (e.g., nationalism). Declining powers could ignore diplomacy but prefer to evaluate if words and deeds are consistent. Thus, diplomacy sets a benchmark to evaluate future behavior against. The author presents an elite survey experiment that simulates a National Security Council assessment of an emerging threat and randomly assigns diplomatic messages and military interventions to subjects. The subjects, real-world foreign policy professionals, trusted the emerging threat when military interventions matched diplomacy and mistrusted it otherwise. These real-world decision-makers relied on cheap-talk to form beliefs.

Rebecca Friedman Lissner, Council on Foreign Relations, Georgetown University, International Relations

**Grand Strategic Crucibles: The Lasting Effects of Military Intervention on State Strategy**

When and how do military interventions shape great powers’ grand strategies? Whereas prevailing theories of grand-strategic change emphasize international-structural or domestic-political factors, this study demonstrates that the process of warfighting reveals new information that reshapes states’ notions of capabilities and interests. In particular, military interventions can serve as crucibles of grand strategy that test the intervening state’s theory of security against the military and political realities of warfare. Three variables determine the vector of grand-strategic change subsequent to military interventions. First, international constraints drive decisions about levels of military means, or the proportion of national resources expended on defense. If a military intervention reveals that a state faces an elevated level of threat in its international environment, the state will increase the proportion of national resources dedicated to defense; if the intervention reveals a diminished threat level, the state will respond by decreasing its allocation of resources to defense. Second, domestic constraints shape estimates of the utility of military force in achieving political objectives and thus determine the scope of foreign-policy ends sought. If a military intervention reveals greater military capabilities and/or greater domestic-political support for the use of force abroad, a state’s propensity to use force is likely to increase with a commensurate expansion of grand-strategic ambition; the opposite result obtains when warfare reveals diminished political will or military capabilities. The interaction of these two variables accounts for variation among four possible grand-strategic vectors: militarization, rebalancing, retrenchment, or conservation. A third variable, the level of immediate threat revealed through warfare, predicts the extent to which post-war grand strategy will emphasize deterrence and defense against future contingencies similar to the war just fought. This study develops and tests this theory using qualitative process-tracing methods in historical case studies of U.S. interventions in the Korean, Vietnam, and First Gulf Wars, based on extensive archival research.

Presenter: Benjamin Schneider, George Mason University, History

**U.S. Army’s Investigation and Adjudication of War Crimes Committed by American GIs during the Second World War**

This dissertation examines the U.S. Army’s response to serious violations of international law committed by American soldiers in the Mediterranean and European Theaters of the Second World War. Focusing primarily on violence perpetrated by American soldiers against Axis POWs and foreign nationals, it looks at how the U.S. Army’s military justice system – from the officers and senior enlisted men at the front tasked with reporting and investigating violations of international law to the judge advocates, generals, and statesmen tasked with trying and punishing perpetrators – responded to a persistent, widespread, and difficult problem. Whereas previous studies have tended to focus on two questions surrounding war crimes committed by Americans during the war – those of motivation and frequency – this study largely eschews those questions in favor of procedural ones. By focusing instead on how the army responded as an institution and how its legal system handled serious crimes against foreign nationals, this study expands our understanding of how American military justice functioned at the front lines and how that system was hindered by the difficult realities of war at the front. This study also makes use of new and previously unused sources. Instead of the memoirs, oral histories, and letters that scholars have previously used to examine war crimes committed by Americans, it draws heavily on official army records – courts-martial transcripts, the correspondence of the judge advocate general, provost marshal, and inspector general’s offices, as well as numerous investigations and reports that have not been examined before. Using these sources, this study argues that the American system of military justice was consistently unable to effectively police its soldiers’ use of violence, both as a result of the inherent legal difficulties of investigating and prosecuting battlefield crimes as well as the conflicted attitudes soldiers held towards war criminals in their own ranks.

**“He Should Follow a Course of Obedience:” American War Criminals and the Superior Orders Defense in the Second World War.**

In March of 1945, Lt. Robert Schneeweis gathered three members of his tank crew and went out to “get a few krauts.” They bagged six – two women gardening, a pair of elderly men crossing a field, and two luckless souls dragged into the basement of their home. Schneeweis’ men would be acquitted of any wrongdoing, as they had only been following orders. The court found that that it was unreasonable to expect “that an enlisted man should stop and deliberate the legality of an order of his superior officer,” they should instead “follow a course of obedience” even when said orders were clearly illegal. It was a perplexing ruling. As the war wound down and preparations were made in earnest to deal with Nazi war criminals, the Allied powers were laying the legal groundwork for the eventual trials. Central to this work was coming to a unified answer to a question certain to be raised during the proceedings: was it a crime if you were only following orders? When the United States entered the war, the Judge Advocate General had a clear answer: no. And yet by 1945 the JAG had, at least in theory, reversed this position to bring the U.S into concordance with its allies. Why then were Schneeweis’ men acquitted when their defense hinged on their obedience to the orders of a superior? The answer to this question is to be found in the peculiar body of case law – the trials of American soldiers who had committed war crimes in Europe during the course of the war. These cases reveal a more nuanced and complicated picture of the U.S. army’s position as to whether superior orders could constitute a defense for serious war crimes.