

International Relations

WMG00801 | Spring 2020

Week 1: Introduction

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Introduction



About Me

- ▶ A political scientist
- ▶ PhD in Advanced Social and International Studies (U Tokyo)
- ▶ Assistant Professor here (Oct 2018 – present)
 - ▶ Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ▶ Research interests
 - ▶ Substantive: Empirical studies of IR, with primary focuses on the causes, dynamics, and outcomes of armed conflicts and long-run effects historical institutions.
 - ▶ Methodological: Event data and archival sources; and causal inference, geographic information system, and image analysis
- ▶ Teaching
 - ▶ International Relations (conflict/security studies)
 - ▶ Quantitative and Analytical Social Science (research methods)
 - ▶ Econometrics and statistical programming (not in HU)

Course Description

- ▶ Introduction to International Relations (IR)
 - ▶ IR \equiv a (sub)field of Political Science (**NOT** interdisciplinary something)
- ▶ With a particular focus on conflicts and the **bargaining model of war**
 - ▶ Introduction to the **now-dominant approach** in conflict studies
 - ▶ **Prerequisite** for studying armed conflicts and related phenomena (e.g., coups, regime change, etc.) at graduate and higher levels
- ▶ **Motivation and Key Question(s):**
 - ▶ Why do armed conflicts ever occur? Given the otherwise unnecessary human and material costs of fighting, why do disputants in some situations fail to strike a war-avoiding bargain?
 - ▶ How do domestic politics and international institutions shape the political bargaining?
 - ▶ Why do some conflicts end within months while others last for years?
 - ▶ What causes civil conflicts? Do the determinants of civil conflicts differ from those shaping international disputes?
etc.

Two transformative turns have driven International Relations (and Political Science more broadly) over the last couple of decades

1 Theoretical turn

- ▶ Fearon (1995) “Rationalist Explanations for War” *IO* 49(3): 379–414
- ▶ From naive “isms” to a rationalist (strategic/game-theoretic) approach

~> This course

2 Methodological turn

- ▶ King et al. (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton UP
- ▶ From naive studies to well-designed scientific inference (descriptive and causal)

~> My Quantitative and Analytical Social Science course (WMH00001, Econ Program)

... 25 years are long enough to transform the whole discipline

Key ideas

- ▶ **Politics** \equiv “authoritative **allocation** of value” (or resources; D. Easton)
- ▶ Both peaceful and non-peaceful transfers of some goods (e.g., territories) are a part of politics
- ▶ Both peaceful settlements AND armed conflicts constitute a part of politics, or “different means” of politics to allocate goods
- ▶ As you can determine the **allocation of goods through peaceful bargaining**, you can also determine the **allocation through fighting**
 - ↪ Almost always, war and fighting (and the extinction of your enemy) are **NOT** the “final product”
 - ↪ Rather, war is a “**continuation of policy** by other means” (Clausewitz)

Fundamental puzzle

- ▶ Why do disputants choose **costly means** (i.e., war) to settle disputes over allocation of goods/values?
- ▶ War is **puzzling** primarily due to its **costly nature**
 - ↪ Diplomacy (talking) is cheaper (more efficient) than war (fighting)
- ▶ “**Inefficiency puzzle**” (Fearon, 1995; Powell, 2006)
 - ↪ Why do disputants resolve disputes through costly means (war), instead of the cheaper and efficient alternative (diplomacy)
 - ↪ Why costly means instead of the cheaper alternative?

Why Do We Study War?

1 Important for human society

- ▶ millions, billions of casualties in human history

2 Important for social science

- ▶ Academic debates since the ancient world (Greece/China!)
- ▶ “Why war” question gave birth to IR in the first place (in the inter-war period)

3 Important for policymaking

- ▶ “War, to be abolished, must be understood. To be understood, it must be studied” (Deutsch, 1970, 473)
(汝, 平和を欲さば, 戦争を理解せよ)

Why Do We Study War?

Researches on the causes of war (both international and domestic) illustrate what you are expected to do in graduate schools

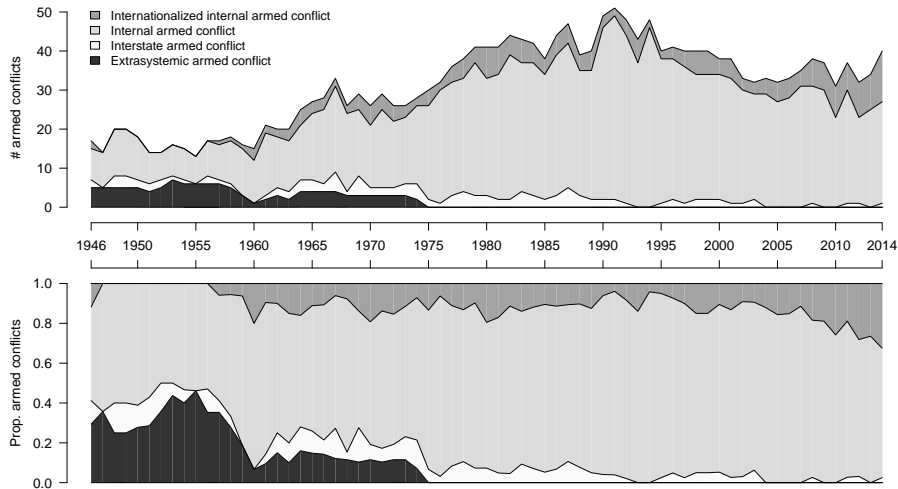
- ▶ **NO** policy prescription without concrete scholarly (scientific) understanding of **WHY** we see **puzzling** phenomena (such as war)
 - Dos** Present new and significant findings by **explaining** some **puzzling** phenomena, based on concrete understanding of the existing theoretical (e.g., formal models) and empirical (e.g., causal inference) works
 - Don'ts** “I study the recent diplomatic efforts in Africa,” “This dissertation examines the details of this conflict,” “I did this interview,” “I think every case is unique,” etc. are **NOT acceptable** at the graduate level
- ▶ So many students (in some course) end up with “I study this case” like papers after 2-5 years of schooling
 - ↪ Do not waste your resources. Time is precious.
 - ↪ You do not have to be quantitative, but you need to be **scientific**
 - ↪ **Summarizing books, documents, and details of some case is NOT a qualitative research paper**

Why Do We See War? War is costly



Source: 毎日新聞社 『一億人の昭和史：日本占領 2』

Why Do We See War? Yet war persists



Data drawn from UCDP/PRIO ACD, 1946–2014

Q Given the otherwise **unnecessary human and material costs** of fighting, why do disputants in some situations **fail to strike a war-avoiding bargain?** (e.g., US-Japan war, 1941–1945)

A1 War is sometimes inevitable. There exists no points of compromise.

A2 Policymakers and countries sometimes behave irrationally.

A3 Imbalance of power causes war.

↪ Unfortunately, as we learn, these answers remain **insufficient and ad hoc** to explain the causes of war and tell us how war can be avoided.

Popular Answers Can Hardly Explain Anything

A1 War is sometimes inevitable. There exists no points of compromise.

~> Why do disputants finally reach peace deals?

~> War almost always ends with some compromise and agreements.

A2 Policymakers and countries sometimes behave irrationally.

~> We should ask ourselves if we understand the meaning of “rational(ity)” correctly in the first place.

~> Rationality broadly means that actors deliberately choose among available options to bring about outcomes they prefer (FLS textbook)

~> **You are rational if you can play “rock paper scissors.”**

~> Why not always war, or not always peace? You can always surrender.

~> “Irrationality” argument can hardly yield relevant policy implications

A3 Imbalance of power causes war.

~> Power balance is always imbalanced (e.g., US after the Cold War)

~> Today's lecture tells you why

- ▶ Frieden, Jeffry A., David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2015. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (Third Edition). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
 - ▶ 2nd or later edition recommended
- ▶ Other books and journal articles
 - ▶ Syllabus (available on my website and Bb9)

Prerequisites

- ▶ No formal prerequisites
- ▶ We will use four arithmetic operations
- ▶ Students who have not taken introductory courses of International Relations should consult the recommended readings
- ▶ Familiarity with the modern history of international relations and (undergraduate-level) game theory will be helpful, but not required

Requirements and Grade Policy

- ▶ Students are expected to do all the assigned readings, attend to every lecture, and participate in classroom discussion
- ▶ **Grades** will be based on
 - 1 participation and presentation (of assigned readings) in classroom discussion (30%);
 - 2 midterm essay (first draft of final research paper) and in-class presentation (30%); and
 - 3 final research paper and presentation (40%). No exams are assigned
- ▶ Details on the requirements and expectations for the assignments will be announced 2–4 weeks before the deadlines
- ▶ Acts of cheating and plagiarism will be punished according to the Hiroshima University's policy

Requirements and Grade Policy

- ▶ Each week, we have a two- to three-period (90–135 min) lecture followed by a one- or two-period (45–90 min) classroom discussion.
- ▶ The length of the final research paper will be 3,000–5,000 words in English (or 6,000–10,000 characters in Japanese) and cover a related topic to the course
- ▶ Students submit a first draft with core research question(s), literature review, and tentative hypothesis in the midterm essay, present it to the class (15–20 minutes), and “revise and resubmit” it as the final research paper with empirical analysis

Microfoundations of Armed Conflicts

What is War?

When we measure it with some data

- ▶ “An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government or territory or both where the use of armed force between two parties results in at least 25 battle-related deaths” (UCDO/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Gleditsch et al., 2002, 618–619)
- ▶ A war is often defined as an armed conflict with 1,000+ battle-related deaths
- ▶ Often over territories, policies, and regime types (domestic politics)
- A “war” does not have to be international

What is War?

When we conceptually define it

- ▶ A “**continuation of policy** by other means” (Clausewitz)
 - ▶ **MORE** than just a large-scale killing and organized violence
- ▶ War is a **bargaining failure** (also a bargaining process)

War and diplomacy

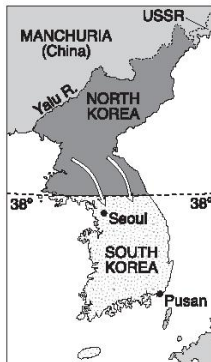
- ▶ Both diplomacy and war are a part of political bargaining to settle disputes over some **scarce** goods
 - ▶ No rooms for disputes with **abundant** goods (disputes over oxygen?)
- ▶ Disputants can resolve disputes by diplomacy, or **bargaining at a negotiation table**
- ▶ Disputants can also resolve disputes by war, or **bargaining at a battlefield**
 - ↪ **Key difference:** Diplomacy is cheaper than war (war is inefficient)

War as a bargaining failure

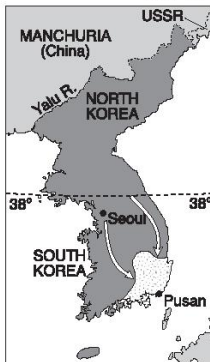
- ▶ Most wars terminate with (peace) agreements rather than the extinction of the enemies (Pillar 1983)
 - ▶ Even a war termination with an “unconditional surrender” involves an agreement between disputants (e.g., Japan’s surrender in 1945)
 - ▶ If they can reach peace deals after costly fighting, **why didn’t they strike a war-avoiding bargain before fighting?**
- ▶ A pre-war agreement would be preferable to war for both sides because war incurs **otherwise unnecessary costs**
- ▶ **Intuition:** Some **bargaining problems** cause the pre-war bargaining fail into inefficient fighting!
 - ↪ **Why do disputants fail to strike a war-avoiding bargain?**
 - ↪ **Why do disputants choose to settle disputes through bargaining at a battlefield rather than bargaining at a negotiation table?**

The Case of the Korean War (1950–1953)

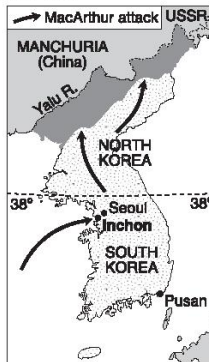
The Korean War



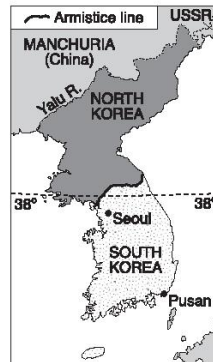
June 25, 1950



Sept. 14, 1950



Nov. 25, 1950



July 27, 1953

Source: Thomas A. Bailey et al., *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998 (adapted)

Source: <https://shrimpamongwhales.com/2016/12/29/korean-war-policies/>

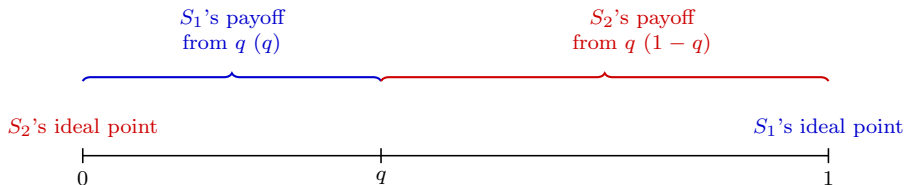
Bargaining Model of War

- ▶ The **bargaining model of war** sees (the onset of) war as a bargaining failure (Fearon, 1995; Powell, 2006)
- ▶ It assumes the *ex post* (Pareto) **inefficiency of war**
 - ▶ War always incurs **otherwise unnecessary costs** that can be avoided with a war-avoiding bargain
- ▶ It sees diplomacy and war as **“different means”** or **instruments** of political bargaining to settle disputes over scarce goods
 - ↪ In principle, you can settle disputes through **bargaining at a negotiation table** (diplomacy) or **bargaining at a battlefield** (war)
- ▶ Let us start with a basic model (where a war **never** occurs)
 - ↪ Relaxing some of the assumptions and changing the setting in turn clarifies the core bargaining problems that cause inefficient fighting

Bargaining Model of War

Setup

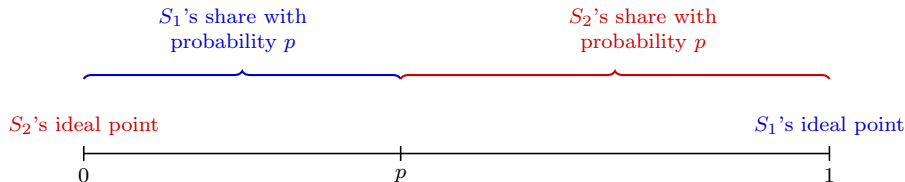
- ▶ Assume States S_1 and S_2 both want the same piece of a scarce good represented by an interval $[0, 1]$
 - ↪ Say, some territory or border setting (FLS book, Chap.3)
- ▶ “1” (for S_1 and thus 0 for S_2) is the best for S_1 while “0” (for S_1 and 1 for S_2) is the best for S_2
 - ↪ “1” means S_1 takes everything, and “0” means S_2 takes everything
- ▶ In the **status quo**, q , S_1 receives q while S_2 receives $1 - q$



Bargaining Model of War

Payoff from War

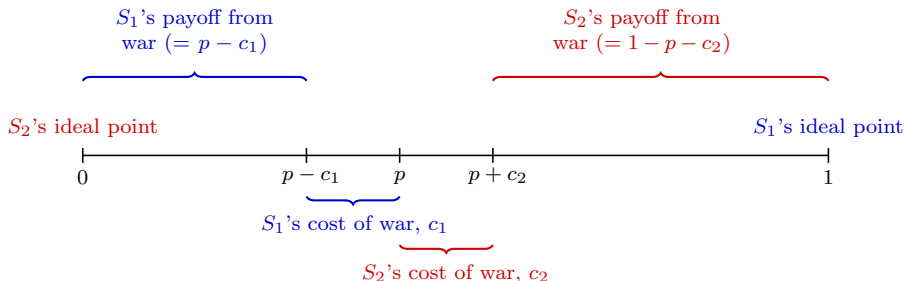
- ▶ Let $p \in [0, 1]$ denote the probability that S_1 prevails in war (and S_2 loses)
 - \rightsquigarrow Reflects the balance of power
- ▶ Let us assume the “winner-takes-all” for a settlement through war
 - ▶ In the case of war, S_1 receives “1” with probability p
 - ▶ S_2 receives “1” with probability $1 - p$



Bargaining Model of War

Payoff from War

- ▶ Expected payoffs from war depend on the **probability of winning p** and the **cost of war $c_i > 0$**
 $\rightsquigarrow c_i$ represents battle deaths, economic costs, etc.
- ▶ S_1 's expected payoff from war $= p \times 1 - c_1 = p - c_1$ (= gains - costs)
- ▶ S_2 's expected payoff from war $= (1 - p) \times 1 - c_2 = 1 - p - c_2$



Bargaining Model of War

Payoffs from diplomacy and war

- ▶ Given p and c_i , how do disputants evaluate the “payoff from bargaining at a table” (**diplomacy**) and “payoff from bargaining at a battlefield” (**war**)?
 - ▶ **Key assumption:** Diplomacy is costless (diplomacy is cheaper than war)
- ▶ **Idea behind:** Compare the payoffs from “different means” to settle a given dispute (diplomacy and war)

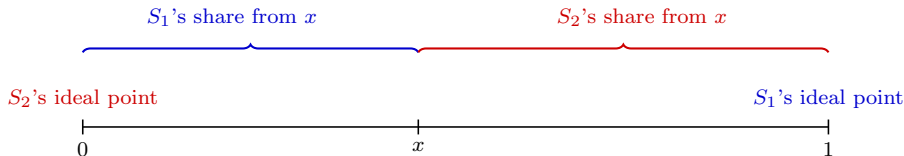
| | | Means | |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------------|
| | | Diplomacy | War |
| State | S_1 | x | $p - c_1$ |
| | S_2 | $1 - x$ | $1 - p - c_2$ |

Bargaining Model of War

When Does Diplomacy Work?

Let $x \in [0, 1]$ denote some diplomatic proposal where S_1 obtains x and S_2 obtains $1 - x$

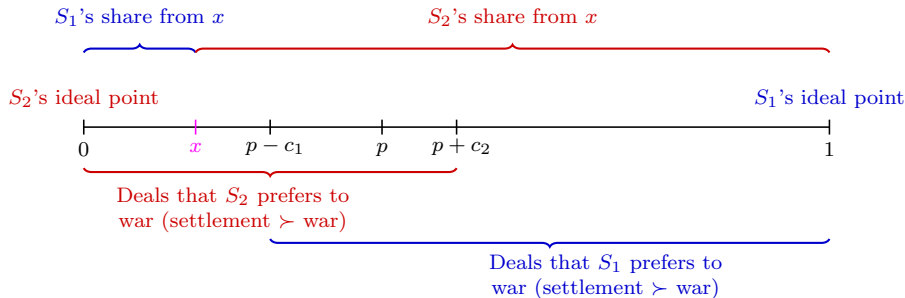
- 1 Given the expected payoffs from war, how do S_1 and S_2 evaluate proposal x ?
- 2 When do S_1 and S_2 prefer x to war and agree to settle the dispute through bargaining at a negotiation table?



Bargaining Model of War

When $x < p - c_1$

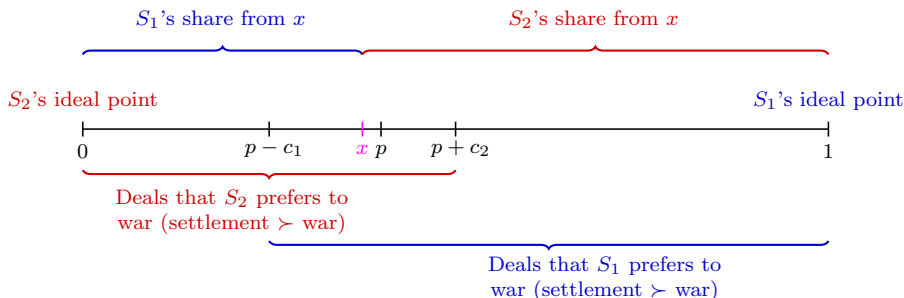
- ▶ S_1 prefers a war to proposal x as it would obtain $p - c_1 > x$ from war
- ▶ S_2 prefers proposal x to war as it would obtain $1 - x > 1 - p - c_2$ from a peaceful settlement



Bargaining Model of War

When $x \in [p - c_1, p + c_2]$

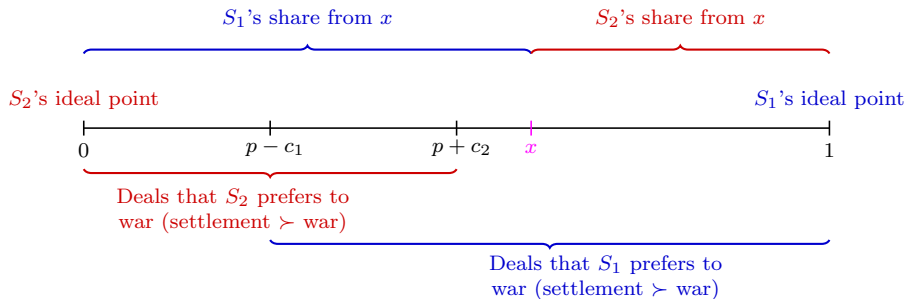
- ▶ S_1 prefers proposal x to war as it would obtain $x > p - c_1$ from a peaceful settlement (x)
- ▶ S_2 prefers proposal x to war as it would obtain $1 - x > 1 - p - c_2$ from a peaceful settlement (x)



Bargaining Model of War

When $x > p + c_2$

- ▶ S_1 prefers x to war as it would obtain $x > p - c_1$ from a peaceful settlement
- ▶ S_2 prefers war to x as it would obtain $1 - p - c_2 > 1 - x$ from war



Bargaining Model of War

Bargaining Range

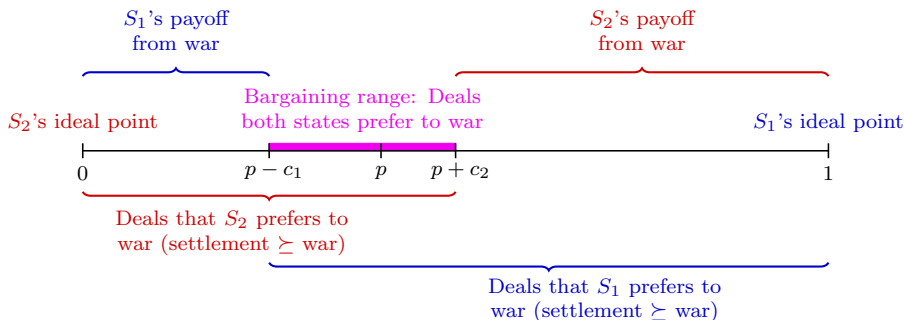
- ▶ When do S_1 and S_2 prefer x to war and agree to settle the dispute through bargaining at a negotiation table?

| Deal x | S_1 's preference | S_2 's preference |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| $x < p - c_1$ | War \succ Diplomacy ($p - c_1 > x$) | Diplomacy \succ War ($1 - x > 1 - p - c_2$) |
| $x \in [p - c_1, p + c_2]$ | Diplomacy \succeq War ($x \geq p - c_1$) | Diplomacy \succeq War ($1 - x \geq 1 - p - c_2$) |
| $x > p + c_2$ | Diplomacy \succ War ($x > p - c_1$) | War \succ Diplomacy ($1 - p - c_2 > 1 - x$) |

Bargaining Model of War

Bargaining Range

- ▶ As far as war is *ex post* inefficient, a bargaining range for a peaceful settlement (that both sides prefer to war) always exists
- ▶ The size of the bargaining range depends on the costs of war (c_i), but not on the balance of power (p) (*per se*)



Bargaining Model of War

A bargaining range (almost) always exists (Powell, 2006, 177)

Even if the disputed issue is indivisible, there are still agreements both sides prefer to resolving the issue through costly fighting. . . . More generally, the fact that fighting is costly implies that a bargaining range always exists even if the states are risk-acceptant, the issue is indivisible, or there are first-strike or offensive advantages.

Causes of War?

- ▶ **Inefficiency Puzzle:** Why, then, do disputants in some situations fail to strike a war-avoiding bargaining despite the inefficiency of war?
 - ▶ in the contexts of international and domestic disputes
- ↪ Can you trust your enemy today and tomorrow?
- ↪ Information problem and credible commitment problem

References

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