

History of American Foreign Policy

IR 376 A-1 / HI 288 A-1

Boston University

Fall 2012

Instructor: Stephen Kinzer – skinzer @ bu.edu

Office: 152 Bay State Road, Room 332

Office Hours: Thursdays 9:30-11:30 or by appointment

Course Description

This course surveys the history of American foreign policy. We will trace the beginnings of engagement between the United States and other countries, rooting it in the expansion that filled the American continent. Seeking the themes that underlie and drive American foreign policy will be an important focus of our work.

We will also seek to place the foreign policy shaped by American leaders in the context of the nation and the views of ordinary citizens.

Because of the great power wielded by the United States, its encounters with foreign nations have often been in the form of invasions, coups, and other interventions. From the Marine assault on Tripoli in 1805 to the recent American-led war in Libya, there have been scores of these episodes. They have shaped American history and the history of the wider world. We will examine a variety of them, and try to answer three questions about each one.

- (1) Why did the United States act?
- (2) How did it act?
- (3) What have been the long-term effects of its action?

From the study of American actions in the world, we will try to extract larger lessons. We will look for patterns that help explain what drives the United States to intervene in other countries, what tools it has available for these interventions, and how American leaders have reacted the successes or failures of intervention. We will also seek to apply what we have learned, considering future foreign policy challenges and assessing possible American responses.

Required Books:

Liberating Kosovo: Coercive Diplomacy and U. S. Intervention, by David L. Phillips
[Note: Please purchase e-book edition]

Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right, by Anders Stephanson

Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA, by John Prados

The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power, by Max Boot

Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of Its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954, by Nick Cullather

The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography, by Louis A. Perez

Required Articles:

Sources of Soviet Conduct, by "X" [George Kennan]

NSC-68

Report on the Covert Activities of the Central Intelligence Agency (Doolittle Report)

Fakiolas, Efstathios T., "Kennan's Long Telegram and NSC-68: A Comparative Analysis," in *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 31, no. 4, January 1998

Monten, Jonathan (2005), "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism and Democracy Promotion in US Strategy," in *International Security*, 29.4 (112-56) [posted]

Class Format

This course will begin by examining the origins of American foreign policy. We will explore the impulses that led to the founding of the United States, and try to understand how those impulses shaped its approach to the world.

From there we will trace the rise of the United States to world power. After discussing its early engagements with foreign nations in the nineteenth century, we will study America's rising global ambitions, beginning with the Spanish-American War and the policies of Theodore Roosevelt. Then we will proceed to the era of gunboat diplomacy in the early twentieth century; the two world wars; the clandestine interventions of the Cold War; and the modern age, including operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya.

Grading will be based mainly on four papers. The first, due Sept. 25, is to be an essay on the origins of American expansionism. It should address the questions of what drove the United States to begin intervening in other countries, and what the early effects of this policy were. This paper should be at least 1,500 words (five pages) long.

Second is a paper, due Oct. 23, analyzing one of the three Cold War documents we will discuss in class. It should present the document's background, explain its contents, and discuss its effects. This paper should also be at least 1,500 words long.

Third is a research paper, due Nov. 29, about a specific intervention of each student's choice. This paper, which is to be at least 4,000 words (14 pages) long, should address the three questions posed on the first page of this syllabus. It should reflect independent reading and research. A partial list of US foreign interventions is attached herewith.

The final exam will be a take-home paper. In our Dec. 6 class, students will receive a sheet with an essay question. It is to be answered with a paper of about 2,000 words (seven pages), due at our last class, on Dec. 8.

Grading will be based principally on these four papers. They will be weighted according to length, with greater weight given to those on which a student does exceptionally well.

Class participation is encouraged. Credit will be apportioned to students who pose trenchant questions or offer lucid insights. Opportunities for modest extra credit will be announced in class.

Sequence of Classes

Sept. 4: Introduction; Historical Roots of American Foreign Policy

Sept. 6: First Ventures Abroad

Reading: Stephanson, pp. 3-65

Boot, pp. 3-29

Sept. 11: Hawaii and the Beginnings of US Expansion in the Pacific

Reading: Stephanson, pp. 66-129; Boot, pp. 30-98

Sept. 13: Spanish-American War

Reading: Perez (all)

Sept. 18: Consolidating Control in the Caribbean Basin

Reading: *The Banana Men*, pp. 7-32 (posted)

Sept. 20: The Philippines

Reading: Boot, pp. 99-128

Sept. 25: Theodore Roosevelt and the Big Stick

DUE: Essay on the origins of American interventionism

Sept. 27: Return to Nicaragua and the Caribbean

Reading: *The Banana Wars*, pp. 137-156, 285-361 (posted); Boot, pp. 156-181

Oct. 2: World War I, Versailles, and the Rise of Woodrow Wilson

Reading: Boot, pp. 156-230; Keylor, pp. 72-95 (posted)

Oct. 4: Between the Wars

Reading: Boot, pp. 231-252

Oct. 11: Cuba and the Missile Crisis

[This class offered out of chronological sequence to mark the 50th anniversary of the crisis]

Reading: Excerpts from Kornbluh, *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (posted)

Guest: Peter Kornbluh

Oct. 16: World War II and Its Aftermath

Reading: Prados, pp. 78-96; Keylor, pp. 253-285 (posted)

Oct. 18: The Cold War; Rise of John Foster Dulles

Reading: Keylor, pp. 286-322 (posted)

Oct. 23: Cold War Documents

Reading:

The 'X' Article: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23331/x/the-sources-of-soviet-conduct>

Doolittle Report: <http://cryptome.org/cia-doolittle.pdf>

NSC 68: <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm>

"Kennan's Long Telegram and NSC-68: A Comparative Analysis" (posted)

DUE: Essay on one of these documents

Oct. 25: Encounter With the Middle East; Coup in Iran

Reading: Prados, pp. 97-123; "Secrets of History: The CIA in Iran" (from *The New York Times*):

<http://www.nytimes.com/library/world/mideast/041600iran-cia-index.html>

Oct. 30: Guatemala

Reading: Cullather (all)

- Nov. 1: Confronting Neutralism; Rise of Nasser and Sukarno
Reading: Prados, pp. 162-183
- Nov. 3: Challenges in Africa; Overthrow of Lumumba
Reading: Prados, pp. 273-282
- Nov. 6: Rise of Cuba; Bay of Pigs Invasion
Reading: Prados, pp. 236-272
- Nov. 8: Vietnam
Reading: Prados, pp. 337-365; Boot, pp. 286-317
- Nov. 13: Chile and the 1973 Coup against President Allende
Reading: Prados, pp. 396-430; United States Senate report "Covert Action in Chile"
<http://foia.state.gov/reports/churchreport.asp>
- Nov. 15: Invasions of Grenada and Panama
The Banana Wars, pp. 370-417 (posted)
- Nov. 20: Kosovo
Reading: Phillips (all)
Guest: David Phillips
- Nov. 27: New Challenges in Latin America
Reading: Prados, pp. 507-538
- Nov. 29: Iraq
Reading: "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine" (posted)
- Dec. 4: Afghanistan
DUE: Paper on a specific intervention
- Dec. 6: Perspectives on American Foreign Policy
Reading: Prados, pp. 606-648
Guest: John Prados
- Dec. 11: Adjusting to a Multi-Polar World; Foreign Policy Challenges in the 21st Century
DUE: Final exam

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Without exception, students are expected to adhere to the Boston University CAS Academic Code. Please read the Boston University Academic Conduct Code. Accordingly, all instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the CAS Academic Conduct Committee. Please see <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code/>

United States Interventions – Partial List

B. Harrison: Hawaii

McKinley: China (Boxer Rebellion – multilateral)

T. Roosevelt: Panama, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Philippines, Guam

Taft: Nicaragua, Honduras

Wilson: Haiti, Dominican Republic, Mexico (Veracruz), Mexico (Punitive Expedition), Soviet Union (multilateral), Cuba

Coolidge: Nicaragua

Eisenhower: Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia, Lebanon, Vietnam, Congo, Cuba

Kennedy: Cuba, Vietnam, Dominican Republic, British Guyana (with Britain), Haiti, Laos, Tibet

Johnson: Vietnam, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Indonesia, Cambodia, Bolivia (Che Guevara), Guatemala

Nixon: Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile, Angola

Ford: Cambodia (Mayaguez)

Carter: Iran (hostage rescue), Nicaragua (with OAS)

Reagan: Grenada, Lebanon, Libya (aircraft only), Persian Gulf, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Haiti

G. H. W. Bush: Panama, Somalia, Iraq (after Gulf War)

Cinton: Haiti (partly multilateral), Afghanistan (missiles), Iraq (missiles), Bosnia (multilateral), Kosovo (multilateral), Colombia (Escobar)

G. W. Bush: Afghanistan (partly multilateral), Iraq (partly multilateral)

Obama: Libya (with NATO); Drone War (regional)