POL 394: Leaders and the Making of US Foreign Policy

Professor: Keren Yarhi-Milo   Course Location: East Pyne, Room 010
Office: Bendheim 117   Course Time: MW 2:30-3:20
Office Hours: via WASS- Wednesday 3:30-4:30 PM
Email: kyarhi@princeton.edu

Preceptors: Diana Stanescu, Harris Doshay
Office: Fisher 206, Corwin 235A
Office Hours: Friday 1:30-2:30 PM, Thursday 1:30-2:30 PM
Email: stanescu@princeton.edu, hdoshay@princeton.edu

Course Description

When we talk about the successes and failures of U.S. foreign policy--in the media, in classrooms, in everyday conversations--we inevitably focus on the individuals making decisions in Washington. The president, the secretary of state, and other top officials are routinely viewed as key shapers of U.S. actions abroad. Yet rarely do we take the trouble to think carefully and analytically about how these leaders view the world, how they arrive at their decisions, and how various psychological factors such as identity, belief, and emotion shape the policies they devise to promote U.S. interests around the world. This class takes leaders as the starting point for understanding U.S. foreign policy and asks some important questions: How do the limits of human cognition and rationality impact leadership? What role do leadership characteristics such as gender, race, prior experience, and even personality play? Do groups of leaders make better decisions than individuals alone (or, are democratic leaders more successful than authoritarian ones)? How do constraints such as the need for intelligence collection, secrecy, and maintaining U.S. reputation abroad influence the decision-making process? Relying on a large body of literature from political psychology and international relations--including in-depth case studies of the Bangladesh War, the end of the Cold War, and the invasion of Iraq--the class will provide students with a more nuanced picture of the psychological constraints that U.S. leaders operate under even before they have to negotiate the messy world of Washington politics.

Requirements:
- Participation: 20%
- In class mid-term: 25%
- Take-home Final OR Final Research Paper: 40%
- Summary and critical review of one week's readings (3 pages; students will choose which weekly readings to write on): 15%

Course Overview
Part I (February): Theoretical Approaches & Leader Attributes
Part II (March 6-24): The Structures of Decision-Making
Midterm Exam (March 13)
Part III (March 27-April 17): Democratic Leaders & Public Opinion
Part IV (April 24 - end of semester): Simulation & Case Analysis
Final Exam or Final Paper

February 8: Theoretical Overview: Leaders and the Study of Foreign Policy

1. Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, "Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In," *International Security,* Vol.25, No. 4 (2001), pp. 107-146.

2. Robert Jervis, "Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?" *Security Studies* 22, 2 (2013): 153-79.

3. Jervis (2017): Policy Series: President Trump and IR Theory
   https://issforum.org/roundtables/policy/1-5b-jervis

Optional:

4. Pages 5-10 of Joe D. Hagan, "Does Decision Making Matter? Systematic Assumptions vs. Historical Reality in International Relations Theory," *International Studies Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer 2001), pp. 5-46.

February 13: Rational Approaches
Bounded Rationality
- Herbert A. Simon. "Rationality and Political Behavior." Political Psychology, (March 1995), pp.45-61
- Pages 297-311 of Bryan D. Jones. "Bounded Rationality." *Annual Review of Political Science.* 1999, pp. 297-312

Prospect Theory. Choose one to read:
   - Barbara Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory," *Political Psychology,* Vol. 13 (June 1992), pp. 205-235.
   OR
   - Rose McDermott, "Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 13 (June 1992), pp. 237-263.

Optional:
- pages 87-94 of Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations" *ISQ* 41 (1997)
- Jack S. Levy, "Prospect Theory and International Relations: Theoretical Applications and Analytical Problems," *Political Psychology, Vol.* 13, No. 2 (1992), pp. 283-310.
- Robert Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," *Political Psychology,* Vol. 13 (June 1992) pp. 187-204

- Jonathan Mercer, "Rationality and Psychology in International Politics." *International Organization,* Vol. 59, No. 1 (Winter, 2005), pp. 77-106
- Barbara Farnham, *Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 245-248.
- James March. "Bounded Rationality, Ambiguity, and the Engineering of Choice." in Jon Elster. ed.. *Rational Choice* (New York: NYU Press, 1986), pp. 142-170
- Rose McDermott, "Prospect Theory in Political Science: Gains and Losses from the First Decade," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Apr., 2004), pp. 289-312
- Levy, Jack S. "Prospect theory, rational choice, and international relations. International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 41, No. 1 (March1997), pp. 87-113.
- Eldar Shafir, "Prospect Theory and Political Analysis: A Psychological Perspective," *Political Psychology,* Vol. 13 (June 1992), pp. 311-322.
- Audrey McInerney, "Prospect Theory and Soviet Policy Towards Syria, 1966-1967," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 13 (June 1992), pp. 265-282.
- Deborah Larson. "Good Judgment in Foreign Policy: Social Psychological Perspectives," in Stanley Renshon and Deborah Larson (eds.), *Good Judgment in Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield), pp. 3-24.
- Jack Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press: 2003), pp. 253-284.
- Rose McDermott, "The Psychological Ideas of Amos Tversky and Their Relevance for Political Science," *Journal of Theoretical Politics, Vol.* 13, No. 1, pp. 5-33.
- Yaacov Y. I. Vertzberger, "Rethinking and Reconceptualizing Risk in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: A Sociocognitive Approach," *Political Psychology* Vol. 16 (June 1995), pp. 347-380.

February 15: Psychological Approaches (I)

Perceptions and Misperceptions:
- Janice Gross Stein, "Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception of Threat." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 2, (Jun., 1988), pp. 245-271

Belief Systems and Historical Analogies
- Elizabeth Saunders, "Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy," International Security, 34/2, pp. 119-161
- Khong, Yuen Foong. "Seduction by Analogy in Vietnam," in Ikenberry, ed., American Foreign Policy. 5th ed. (New York: Longman, 2005), pp. 506-516

Optional:
- Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception" in G. John Ikenberry & Peter L. Trubowitz, ed., *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 7th edition), pp. 503-520.
- Philip Tetlock and Charles McGuire. "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy," in G. John Ikenberry & Peter L. Trubowitz, ed., *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 7th edition), pp. 489-502.

- Robert Jervis, "Understanding Beliefs," *Political Psychology* Vol. 27, No. 5 (2006), pp. 641-663.
- Richard K. Herrmann and Michael P. Fischerkeller, "Beyond the Enemy Image and Spiral Model: Cognitive-Strategic Research After the Cold War," *International Organization,* Vol. 49 (Summer 1995), pp. 415-450.
- Alexander L. George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective use of Information and Advice* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), Chapter 3.
- Ole Holsti. "The Belief System and National Images: John Foster Dulles." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. VI (1962), pp. 244-252

February 20: Psychological Approaches (II)
Choose one of the two to read:
- Keith L. Shimko. "Reagan on the Soviet Union and the Nature of International Conflict." *Political Psychology*. Vol. 13, No. 3. (Sep., 1992), pp. 353-377.

OR

- Jonathan Renshon, "Stability and Change in Belief Systems: The Operational Code of George W. Bush," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, 6 (December 2008), pp. 820-849.

Optional:
- Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly*, 13 (June 1969), pp. 190-222.
- Alexander L George, "The Causal Nexus Between Cognitive Beliefs and Decisionmaking Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System," in Lawrence S. Falkowski, (ed.) *Psychological Models in International Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (1979). pp. 95-124.
- Daniel Heradstveit and G. Matthew Bonham, "Attribution Theory and Arab Images of the Gulf War," *Political Psychology, Vol.* 17 (June 1996), pp. 271-292.

February 22: Leaders, Emotions, and Foreign Policy
- Jonathan Mercer, "Emotions and Strategy in the Korean War," *International Organization*, 67:2 (April 2013), pp. 221-52.
- Oded Lowenheim and Gadi Heiman, "Revenge in International Politics," Security Studies, (2008), pp. 685-724

February 27: Face to Face Interactions between Leaders
- Todd Hall and Keren Yarhi-Milo, "The Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signaling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs. *International Studies Quarterly*, 56:3 (Sep 2012), pp. 560-73.
- Marcus Holmes and Keren Yarhi-Milo, "The Psychological Logic of Peace Summits: How Empathy Shapes Outcomes of Diplomatic Negotiations, " *International Studies Quarterly*, (2016), pp. 1-16.

March 6: Leadership Characteristics, Experience and Foreign Policy
Choose one of the two:
- Michael C. Horowitz and Allan C. Stam, "How Prior Military Experience Influences the Future Militarized Behavior of Leaders," *International Organization*, 68:3 (Summer 2014), pp. 527-59.

Or

- Matthew Fuhrmann and Michael C. Horowitz, "When Leaders Matter: Rebel Experience and Nuclear Proliferation," *The Journal of Politics*, 77:1 (January 2015), 72-87.

AND:
- Elizabeth N. Saunders (forthcoming), "No Substitute for Experience: Presidents, Advisers, and Information in Group Decision-Making," *International Organizations*.

Optional:
- Barbara Farnham, "Ronald Reagan and the Gorbachev Revolution." *Political Science Quarterly,* Vol. 116, Number 2, (Summer 2001) , pp. 225-252(28)
- Peter Trubowitz, Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), Chapter 2 ("Grand Strategy's Microfoundations").
- Jeff D. Colgan and Jessica L. Weeks, "Revolution, Personalist Dictatorships, and International Conflict," *International Organization*, 69:1 (Winter 2015), 163-194.
- Margaret G. Hermann, Thomas Preston, Baghat Korany, Timothy M. Shaw, "Who Leads Matters: The Effects of Powerful Individuals:" *International Studies Review,* Vol. 3, No. 2, (Summer, 2001), pp. 83-131

Optional:
- David Winter et al. "The Personalities of Bush and Gorbachev Measured at a Distance." *Political Psychology,* Vol. 12, No. 2 (Jun., 1991), pp. 215-245
- David Winter et al. The Personalities of Bush and Gorbachev at a Distance: Follow-Up on Predictions," *Political Psychology,* Vol. 12, No. 3 (Sep., 1991), pp. 457-464
- Selected chapters from *The Psychological Assessment of Political Leaders with Profiles of Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton*. Edited by Jerrold M. Post. (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2006).
- David Winter, "Personality and Political Behavior." In *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, eds. David Sears, Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis. (New York: Oxford University Press 2003). pp. 110-145.
- Paul Lettow, *Ronald Reagan and his Quest to Abolish Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Random House, 2006), Chapter 1: "Origins", pp. 3-41.

March 8: Who Is In The Room?

- Elizabeth N. Saunders, "War and the Inner Circle: Democratic Elites and the Politics of Using Force," *Security Studies*, 24:3 (Sep 2015), pp. 466-501.
- Steven B. Redd, "The Influence of Advisers and Decision Strategies on Foreign Policy Choices: President Clinton's Decision to Use Force in Kosovo," *International Studies Perspectives*, 6:1 (2005), 129-50.
- Christopher Gelpi and Peter Feaver, "Speak Softly and Carry a Big Stick? Veterans in the Political Elite and American Use of Force," *American Political Science Review*, 96:4 (December 2002), 779-793.

  Optional:
- Baloch, Bilal. "Trump's Proposed Administration Isn't Ideologically Diverse. That Can Be Dangerous." Washington Post. 8 Dec. 2016. Web.
- Adams, Gordon. "If All You Have Is a Mattis, Everything Looks Like a Nail." Foreign Policy. 2 Dec. 2016. Web.

- Bruce W. Jentleson, "Discrepant Responses to Falling Dictators: Presidential Belief Systems and the Mediating Effects of the Senior Advisory Process," *Political Psychology*, 11:2 (June 1990), 353-84.
-

Optional:

- Irving Janis, *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes,* 2nd ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), Chapter 10
- Glen Whyte, "Groupthink Reconsidered," *Academy of Management Review* 14 (1989), pp. 40-56.
- Paul t'Hart, "Irving L. Janis' Victims of Groupthink," *Political Psychology* 12 (1991), pp. 247-277.
- Jean A. Garrison, "Foreign Policymaking and Group Dynamics: Where We've Been and Where We're Going," *International Studies Review* 5 (2003), pp. 177-83.

March 13: Leaders, Intelligence and Foreign Policy
- Charles A. Duelfer and Stephen Benedict Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience." *International Security*, 36:1 (Summer 2011): 73–100.
- Keren Yarhi-Milo, "In the Eye of the Beholder: How Leaders and Intelligence Communities Assess the Intentions of Adversaries." *International Security*, 38:1 (Summer 2013): 7–51.
- Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011.
- Patrick Roberts & Robert Saldin, "Why President Sometimes Do Not Use Intelligence Information," *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 2016-7.

Optional:
- Jonathan Renshon, "Mirroring Risk: The Cuban Missile Estimation, Intelligence and National Security," *Intelligence and National Security*, 24:3 (2009), 315-338.
- Janice Gross Stein, "Threat Perception in International Relations." In Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy, eds., *Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 364-94.

March 15: Midterm

SPRING BREAK

March 27: Secrecy and the Conduct of Foreign Policy
- Keren Yarhi-Milo, "Tying Hands Behind Closed Doors: The Logic and Practice of Secret Reassurance," *Security Studies*, 22:3 (2013), pp. 405-35.
- Scott D. Sagan and Jeremi Suri, "The Madman Nuclear Alert," *International Security*, 27:4 (Spring 2003), pp. 150-83.
- Austin Carson and Yarhi-Milo, "Covert Communication: The Intelligibility and Credibility of Signaling in Secret," Security Studies, 2016.

March 29: How to write a research paper

April 3: Credibility, Reputation, and Foreign Policy Decision-Making
- Daryl G. Press, Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005, Introduction and Chapter 3 ("Crises over Berlin").
- Alex Weisiger and Keren Yarhi-Milo, "Revisiting Reputation: How Past Actions Matter in International Politics," International Organization, 69:2 (Spring 2015), pp. 473-95.

Optional:
- Jonathan Mercer, Reputation and International Politics. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, Introduction and Chapter 1 ("Reputation and Deterrence Theory").
- Alexandra Guisinger, "Honest Threats: The Interaction of Reputation and Political Institutions in International Crises," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 46:2 (April 2002), pp. 175-200.
- Marc Trachtenberg, "Audience Costs: A Historical Analysis," Security Studies, 21:1 (2012), 3-42.

April 5: Are Democracies More Peaceful?
- Bruce Russett, "Why Democratic Peace?" In Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn- Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 82-115.
- John Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security, Vol.* 19, NO. 2 (autumn 1994), pp. 87-125.
- Alexander B. Downes & Mary Lauren Lilley (2010), "Overt Peace, Covert War?: Covert Intervention and the Democratic Peace," *Security Studies*, 19:2, pp. 266-306.

Optional:
- Joanne Gowa, Democratic States and International Disputes, *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3, (Summer 1995), pp. 511-522.
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith, "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 93, No. 4 (December 1999), pp. 791-807.
- Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). pp. 23-83

April 10: Leaders and Domestic Audience Cost
- Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," International Organization, 62:1 (January 2008), 35-64.
- Jack Snyder and Erica Borghard, "The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound," American Political Science Review, 105:3 (August 2011), 437-456.
- Joshua Kertzer and Ryan Brutger, "Decomposing Audience Costs: Bringing the Audience Back into Audience Cost Theory," *American Journal of Political Science*, 60:1 (January 2016), pp. 234-249.
- Croco, Sarah, "The Decider's Dilemma: Leader Culpability, War Outcomes, and Domestic Punishment," *American Political Science Review*, 105:3 (2011), pp. 457-477.

April 12: General Petraeus Guest Lecturer
Readings TBD

April 17: April 19: Democratic Triumphalism or Defeatism?
- Brooks, Risa (2006). "An Autocracy at War: Explaining Egypt's Military Effectiveness, 1967 and 1973," *Security Studies*, 15:3, 396-430.

- Desch, Michael C. (2002). "Democracy and Victory: Why Regime Type Hardly Matters," *International Security*, 27:2, 5-47.
- Renshon Jonathan, Kertzer Joshua, and Yarhi-Milo Keren, Democratic Leaders, Resolve and War (paper will be available on-line)
- Alexander B. Downes, "How Smart and Tough are Democracies? Reassessing Theories of Democratic Victory in War," International Security, 33:4 (Spring 2009), 9-51.

Optional:
- Reiter, Dan and Allan C. Stam (2002). *Democracies at War* (Princeton University Press), Chapters 1-3.

April 19th: no class

April 24: Iraq
Readings TBD

April 26: Crisis simulation!

Make up class 1: Domestic Political Constraints and Public Opinion
- Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, Jason Reifler, *Paying the Human Costs of War: American Public Opinion and Casualties in Military Conflicts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), Chapters 1, 2, 6.
- Thomas J. Christensen, Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958, Princeton University Press (1996). Chapters TBD
- Galen Jackson, "The Showdown that Wasn't: US-Israel Relations and Domestic Constraints, International Security, 2015
- Elizabeth N. Saunders, "Leaders, Advisers, and the Political Origins of Elite Support for War, Security Studies, https://profsaunders.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/leadersadvisersoct2016.pdf

Make up Class 2: Case Analysis
We will vote on what case study to cover in depth. Some options:
   1. Cuban Missile Crisis
   2. The End of the Cold War
   3. The First Gulf War
   4. The Second Gulf War (i.e. The Iraq War)
   5. Others?