TEACHING THE 2003 IRAQ WAR

THREE PROPOSED TOPICS WITH SOURCES AND QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

TOPIC 1
WAS IT JUST?

Issues

- False narratives about weapons of mass destruction and terrorist links as justification for armed regime change
- Ethical and legal judgments on the invasion of Iraq and the doctrine of preemptive attack
- Post-9/11 authorizations to use force and launch U.S. drone strikes today

Readings and sources

Bruce Riedel, "9/11 and Iraq: The making of a tragedy," *Lawfare*, September 11, 2021, 9/11 and Iraq: The Making of a Tragedy - Lawfare (lawfareblog.com)

Michael Walzer, "The Right Way," *New York Review of Books*, March 13, 2003.

Mary Ellen O'Connell, "The Legal Case Against the Global War on Terror," *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, 349 (2004), "The Legal Case Against the Global War on Terror" by Mary Ellen O'Connell (nd.edu)

Brianna Rosen, "The Longest War is Over the Horizon," *Just Security*, November 1 2021, The Longest War is Over the Horizon (justsecurity.org)

Questions

- Was the Iraq war based on "faulty intelligence" or deliberate misinformation?
- How does Putin's war of choice in Ukraine compare to Bush's war of choice in Iraq?
- Small groups to debate: Is the current U.S. policy of launching drone and aircraft strikes in various countries a morally justifiable use of force?

TOPIC 2 COST AND CONSEQUENCES

Issues

- The toll in lives lost and dollars spent; occupation and going over to the "dark side"
- Violent instability in the Levant and the rise of ISIS
- Increased Islamophobia, police violence and racial intolerance in the U.S. and beyond

Readings and sources

Neta Crawford, "The Iraq War has cost the U.S. nearly $2 trillion," Military Times, February 6, 2020, The Iraq War has cost the US nearly $2 trillion (militarytimes.com)

"Mayer Reveals 'Dark Side' of War on Terror," Terry Gross, Fresh Air, National Public Radio, October 24, 2008, Mayer Reveals 'Dark Side' Of War On Terror : NPR

Jessica Katzenstein, "The Wars Are Here: How the United States' Post-9/11 Wars Helped Militarize U.S. Police," September 16, 2020, Watson Institute, Brown University, Microsoft Word - Police Militarization_Costs of War_Sept 16 2020.docx (brown.edu)

Khaled A. Beydoun, "Exporting Islamophobia in the Global 'War on Terror,'" New York University Law Review Online, 95 (2020), Microsoft Word - Beydoun-fin.docx (nyulawreview.org)

Nadje Al-Ali and Nicola Pratt, "Conspiracy of Near Silence: Violence Against Iraqi Women," 2011, Conspiracy of Near Silence.pdf (brown.edu)

Questions

- Have the post-9/11 wars made America and the world safer?
- Is there a relationship between the global war on terror and the erosion of democratic rights at home and in other countries?
- How will the costs and consequences of the war affect future generations in this country and in Iraq?

TOPIC 3 ALTERNATIVES TO WAR

Issues

- The road not taken: the role of the UN, weapons inspections, targeted sanctions, and diplomacy
- February 15, 2003, the largest antiwar protests in history; an overview of global opinion
- Nonmilitary means of countering violent extremism and policy implications for today

Readings and sources

David Cortright, George A. Lopez, Alistair Millar, "Unknown Knowns: Trading Failure for Success in Iraq," April 2022, Fourth Freedom Forum. https://www.fourthfreedomforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-July-Unknown-Knowns.pdf

Rebecca Solnit, "Acts of Hope: Challenging Empire on the World Stage," *Mother Jones* (14 June 2005), https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2005/06/acts-hope-challenging-empire-world-stage/

Jennifer Walkup Jayes, "Beyond the War Paradigm: What History Tells Us About How Terrorist Campaigns End," February 8, 2022, Watson Institute, Brown University, Microsoft Word - Walkup Jayes War Paradigm Paper_2022_02_07 FINAL-5.docx (brown.edu)

Questions

- Why did the largest peace movement in history fail to stop the invasion of Iraq? What influences did the movement have?
- Small groups propose alternative policies for countering violent extremism and enhancing security through diplomacy, development and peacebuilding.
- Do Americans owe the Iraqi people reparations after the loss of life and destruction we caused?

THE 2003 IRAQ WAR: A BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Baghdad Burning: Girl Blog From Iraq, by Riverbend (New York: The Feminist Press of the City University of New York, 2005).

Helen Benedict, The Lonely Soldier: The Private War of Women Serving in Iraq (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010).

Hans Blix, *Disarming Iraq* (New York: Pantheon, 2009).

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007).

Patrick Cockburn, *The Occupation: War and Resistance in Iraq* (London: Verso, 2007).

Robert Draper, *To Start a War: How the Bush Administration Took America into Iraq* (Penguin Books, 2020).

Lessons from Iraq: Avoiding the Next War, Miriam Pemberton and William D. Hartung, editors (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2008).

Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 2006).

The U.S. Army in the Iraq War, Volume 2, Surge and Withdrawal, Colonel Joel D. Rayburn and Colonel Frank K. Sobchak, editors (Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2019).

Haifa Zangana, *City of Widows: An Iraqi Woman's Account of War and Resistance* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2009).

Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan: Eyewitness Accounts of the Occupations, Iraq Veterans Against the War and Aaron Glantz (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2008).

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Stephen Biddle, Jeffrey A. Friedman and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007," *International Security*, Vol. 37, no. 1 (Summer 2012), 7-40.

Neta Crawford, "The Iraq War has cost the U.S. nearly $2 trillion," *Military Times*, February 6, 2020, The Iraq War has cost the US nearly $2 trillion (militarytimes.com)

FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), "In Iraq Crisis, Networks Are Megaphones for Official Views," March 18, 2003, In Iraq Crisis, Networks Are Megaphones for Official Views - FAIR

Steven Kull, Clay Ramsay and Evan Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 118, No. 4 (Winter, 2003/2004), 569, Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War on JSTOR

Malik Miah, "Black America and the Iraq War," *Against the Current* 104, May-June 2003, Black America and the Iraq War – Against the Current

Jonathan Schell, "The Other Superpower," *The Nation* (27 March 2003), https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/other-superpower/

Rebecca Solnit, "Acts of Hope: Challenging Empire on the World Stage," *Mother Jones* (14 June 2005).

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Films

Official Secrets, Directed by Gavin Hood, starring Keira Knightley and Ralph Fiennes,
Entertainment One, IFC Films, 2019.

Uncovered: The War on Iraq, Directed by Robert Greenwald, Brave New Films, 2004.

We Are Many, Directed by Amir Amirani, Amirani Media, 2020.

Why We Fight, Written and directed by Eugene Jarecki, Sony Pictures Classics, 2005.

For additional sources on the Iraq War from the Costs of War project, go to this site.

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