

OUTLINE OF LECTURE 7: THE CAUSES OF WAR

1. The Puzzle of War

- why rationalist explanations?
- war as a bargaining problem
- bargaining range always exists
- latent use of force to drive bargains

2. Rationalist Explanations for War

1. indivisibility of stakes

- shared control
- side-payments

2. asymmetric information

- private information
- incentives to misrepresent
- risk-return trade-off
- risks vs. mistakes
- war as a bargaining process
- wartime revelation of information
- convergent expectations
- two examples: Seven Weeks War (1866), Serbo-Bulgarian War (1885)

3. credible commitment problem

- time inconsistency
- preemptive war
- preventive war
- armistice and cease-fires
- ethnic conflict and disarmament
- power transition theory?
- two examples: Peloponnesian War (432 BC), Second World War (1939)

4. the costs of peace

- preventing power shifts
- example: China's intervention in the Korean War (1950)