

Diablo Valley College – International Relations (POLSC 250 – 8609)  
Research Paper – Fall 2020 Online

The 2003 War in Iraq: Theory and Aftermath

**Question:** The recent protests in Iraq demanding the unconditional withdrawal of *all* U.S. troops and contractors has renewed debate over the ultimate rationale and objective of the American invasion and occupation of the country in 2003. Using the 9 theories we have examined as models for analyzing interstate conflict, describe the ultimate reasons for the war between the United States and Iraq; the historical and theoretical background for the tension between these countries, and the possible outcomes of the recent instability and violence.

**Sample Outline**

(But feel free to design your outline any way you wish)

**I. Introduction / Thesis Statement** – a brief statement outlining your position or something relevant about this issue.

**II. Body** – the bulk of the paper is here, in data taken from the readings and other evidence you have found in support of your position.

**A. Historical background to the conflict**

1. Rise of Saddam Hussein
2. Iran – Iraq War (1980-88)
3. US relations with Iraq

Theoretical Perspective?

**B. The first Persian Gulf War (January 1991 – “Operation Desert Storm”)**

1. Critical outcomes

Theoretical Perspective?

**C. The 1990’s**

1. The sanctions
2. UN Resolutions

Theoretical Perspective?

**D. The second Gulf War (March 2003 – “Operation Iraqi Freedom”)**

1. Critical outcomes (is the war really over?)
2. War on Terror (September 11<sup>th</sup>?)

Theoretical Perspective?

**III. Conclusion** – based on the evidence you have gathered, your opinion on which of the 9 theories is probably the most accurate for describing *why* this war occurred and continues.

**Extras:**

1. Make sure to include an in-text citation *every time you use a statement or an idea from the readings that I have provided, or that you found in your own independent research*. Your grade will be dramatically reduced if you plagiarize.

2. “A” papers will be:

- a. *fully* documented and cited in *APA citation format* (please include 2-3 books)
- b. a *minimum* of 15 pages (including title, abstract, and reference page, meaning 12 *full* pages of text analysis)
- c. research *beyond* authors provided
- d. turned in *on time* (November 18, 2020)