

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
HUMAN NATURE AND COGNITIVE THEORIES

Terms and concepts to know:

Human Nature

"State of Nature"/ Leviathan

Personality/ Cognition

Participatory leader

Elites

Instinct

Competition/ Diffidence/ Glory

Independent Leader

Operational reality

Perception/ misperception

Discussion and study questions:

1. How did Aristotle view war? Did he suggest that humans needed for war?
2. Discuss the conditions of humankind in the state of nature as described by Hobbes. What exactly does "war of all against all" mean? Do you agree with his description?
3. Examine the correspondence between Freud and Einstein on the question, *Why War?* Do you believe Freud's explanation is solid? Why or why not?
4. What are some of the primary arguments in Taylor's "The Psychology of War." Do you agree or disagree with this analysis and why?
5. Steve Connor argues that war was a relatively alien concept in early human history. What evidence does he present and is it compelling?
6. Ferguson charges that anthropologists and archaeologists agree that humans have an obvious capacity to engage in warfare, but their brains are not hardwired to identify and kill outsiders involved in collective conflicts. After reading his essay, would you agree? Why or why not?
7. Maria Santelli presents the concept of "killology." What does this concept mean and how does it relate to the U.S. military? What are your impressions of this concept?
8. How has the "Eurocentric modernist tradition" (according to Kanth), removed human beings from their "true" nature? What is the solution to this dilemma?
9. Comment on the film *Soldiers of Conscience*. It appears that some of the soldiers are making an argument for cognitive theory. Would you agree?

Readings:

Text. *Conflict and Cooperation*, Chapters 8 and 9.

Video:

Soldiers of Conscience.