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ANATOMY OF INITIATION: A UNIFIED THEORY ON INTERSTATE WAR INITIATION

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with Honors in the International Relations and Affairs

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Spring 2020

All requirements for graduation with Honors in the
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05/12/20

Anatomy of Initiation: A Unified Theory on Interstate War Initiation¹

Abstract: *Scholarly work on interstate war has focused on a plethora of variables that increase the risk of war between states, but there is less of an understanding on how all these variables contribute as a whole to the likelihood of interstate war. This continued gap of knowledge in conflict studies leaves the puzzle of war still very much alive. In this paper, I draw from the work of Dave Grossman and his psychological theory on killing as the structure for a more complete model of state conflict that merges with our understanding on concepts, such as alliances, rivalry, capability, contiguity, state leaders, and more. I then apply this theory to a qualitative case study of Japan-U.S. relations between 1853-1941 to explore Japan's conflict decisions in three separate time periods. Results indicate that this unified theory on interstate war initiation holds promise for helping solve the puzzle of war. Quantitative testing, as well as application to other areas of conflict, such as civil war, are avenues for future research.*

Problems in international relations (IR) are given the analogy of being puzzles but a big issue with this analogy is that solving puzzles usually involves looking at the picture provided on the box. Without a picture a puzzle can be gruelingly difficult to solve as the number of pieces increase. One such puzzle in IR without a picture and with an abundance of pieces is war. Solving this puzzle of why states go to war is a vital question to answer due to the loss of life it causes. Even more so now since war has the potential to eradicate humanity due to nuclear weapons. Compounding the problem further, with the current uncertainties of world power and rumors of war between two of the greatest countries in the world, knowing what causes states to go to war can help prevent war from happening in the first place. Scholars have identified many

¹ A big thank you to Nicholas Martini, Stephen Vlastos, Richard Tyner, and my wife for taking the time to read, edit, and give guidance on this paper.

pieces of the war puzzle but attempts at putting them together have been minimal, which does not help the effort in solving this puzzle. What needs to be done then is to find the war puzzle's picture to be able to put all the pieces together to avoid, or at least manage, future conflicts. That picture I believe can be found in the act of killing².

If war is stripped of its current definitions and thresholds and looked at for what it is then war is organized groups of people choosing to kill each other. This may be stating the obvious, but it points to overlooked aspects in the definition of war being "sustained combat, involving organized armed forces, resulting in a minimum of 1,000 battle-related fatalities" (Sarkees 2010). There is a vast psychological difference between combat and killing, states and people, which is unaccounted for in IR studies. Additionally, there is the point that it was a decision rather than an accident, a random event, or something that happened once all the conditions were fulfilled. War is people *choosing* to kill each other, so perhaps the question should not be why or what causes states to go to war, but why or what causes people to kill. Seen in this light, does the psychology behind the act of killing help explain interstate war initiation?

In this paper I argue that the factors which make states more likely to go to war are like the factors which make people more likely to kill. I do this by combining Dave Grossman's psychological theory on killing with studies on interstate conflict to create a unified theory on interstate war initiation. I then apply this novel theory to a case study of Japan-U.S. relations between 1853-1941 to see if it better explains Japan's decisions when it became entangled in conflict with the U.S. What follows will first be a review of Grossman's theory on killing, followed by a review of existing studies on interstate conflict that are related to Grossman's

² By killing I refer to "sanctioned" killing like in war. Not "illegal" killing such as murder.

theory. Next will be a discussion of the theory and research design of the case study followed by the analysis of it. Last will be a discussion of the findings and suggestions for future research.

Review of Grossman's Anatomy of Killing

Dave Grossman's work is a culmination of studies, histories, stories, reports, and observations of soldier behavior in combat regarding the act of killing. There was a genuine problem with what was found: soldiers were not killing the enemy. In the 19th century the Prussians tested the accuracy of smoothbore muskets by firing at a 100-foot by 6-foot target—representative of the usual 200-man units in battle—and found a hit rate of 60% at 75 yards (Grossman 2009).

Theoretically one 200-man unit should have been able to hit 120 enemy soldiers in the first volley, and because four bullets could be loaded per minute, around 480 enemy soldiers could be killed every minute (Grossman 2009). Oddly enough during battles of this century the opposing units would shoot at each other from an average distance of 30 yards and only one to two soldiers would be killed every minute (Grossman 2009). This strange lack of killing was also found in World War Two.

During World War Two, General S.L.A. Marshall interviewed soldiers who returned from firefights with the enemy and found that only 15-20% of soldiers fired their weapons at the enemy (Marshall 1978). Even more surprising was that after World War Two the U.S. Army Air Corps found that 1% of its fighter pilots shot down 40% of all enemy aircraft (Gabriel 1986). 80% of soldiers did not fire their weapons at the enemy when their lives were at risk, and 99% of fighter pilots accounted for only 60% of all shot down enemy aircraft. The only conclusion that could be drawn from these numbers was that soldiers were choosing not to kill. General S.L.A. Marshall studied this issue and concluded that the average person has such a resistance to killing that they will not do it of their own will (Marshall 1978). Another observed similar behavior but

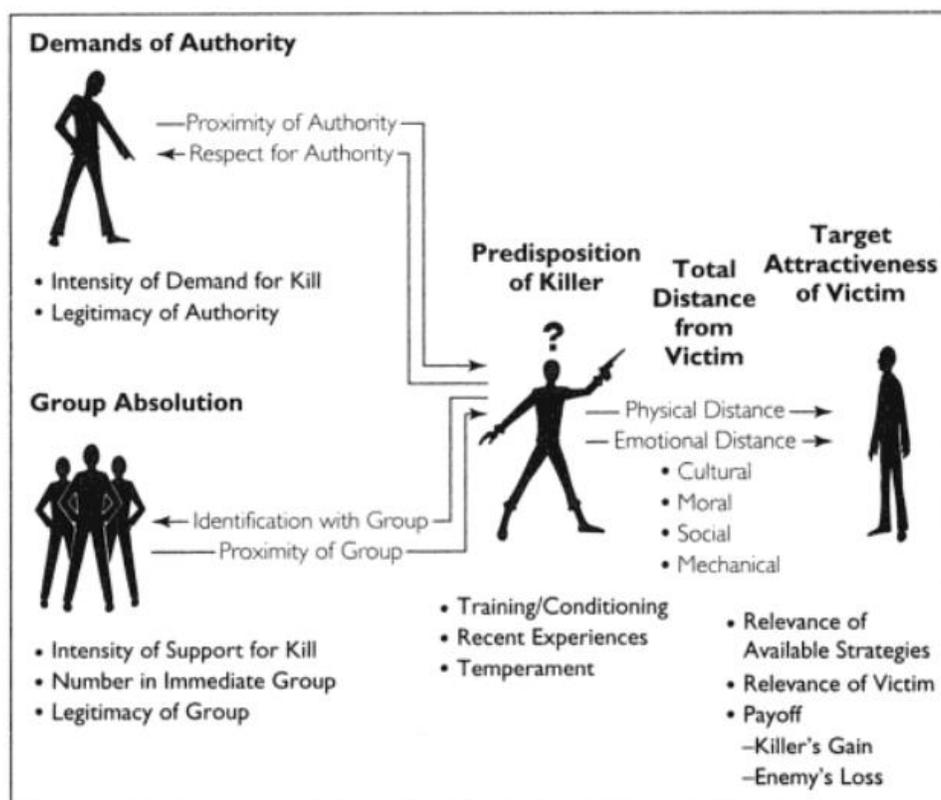
concluded that under compulsion people will kill (Dyer 1985). What these studies definitively prove is that killing is an immensely challenging thing to do and one that most soldiers and people will not do. These studies also showed two things, the first is that there is more than a kill-or-be-killed option for soldiers in combat. The second is that there was a consistent pattern of factors when soldiers do kill.

The Soldier's Options on the Battlefield

To understand the options soldiers on the battlefield have it helps to look at the behavior of aggression in animals. The fight-or-flight model is well-known but only works in explaining animal behavior in a specific circumstance. When an animal is presented with danger from an animal of a different species the actions of fight or flight are observed, but when an animal is presented with danger from an animal of the same species different actions are seen (Grossman 2009). In this latter situation a different set of choices and pattern of behavior is observed. The options of posture and submit are added to the choices of fight and flight, and when they get into conflict the first choice is between flight or posture (Grossman 2009). Instinctively these animals do not go straight into the fight but instead go through a series of threatening posturing actions that are mostly harmless (Grossman 2009). By appearing to be a ferocious adversary both animals hope the other will back down without a fight. Should posturing fail though then the options become fight, flight, or submission (Grossman 2009).

If the animals elect to fight, then it is never to the death. If deaths do occur it was unintentional because deliberate killing would be detrimental to the survival of the species, so instead the fights are constrained and nonlethal (Grossman 2009). During this mock battle, the choices animals have become flight or submit in which one animal will quit the fight because of the opponent's strength, endurance, ferocity, or skill (Grossman 2009). The interesting part about

this pattern of aggression is the lack of real violence. Neither animal seeks to truly kill or harm the opponent, yet they are still aggressive and competitive, creating a “perfect illusion of violence” (Grossman 2009). Soldiers, primitive tribe members, and street gangs have displayed a similar set of choices and patterns of aggression (Grossman 2009), but where humans differ from animals is that humans can be influenced to overcome their resistance to killing by five factors. These five factors that Grossman observed each increased the likelihood that the soldier would choose to kill when they were present, rather than letting the enemy live.



Anatomy of Killing Model (Grossman 2009, 142)

The Factor of Demands of Authority

The first factor that increases the soldier's likelihood of killing is what Grossman calls the demands of authority. After piecing together findings in psychology and battle reports on soldier behavior in combat, an authority figure—or leader—was found to make soldiers more likely to

kill. The demands of authority factor found in the leader consists of four variables: the intensity of demand to kill; the leader's legitimacy; the physical proximity between the leader and the soldier; and the soldier's respect for the leader. Starting with the intensity of demand to kill variable, Dr. Milgram's notorious study found that 65% of people could be compelled to "kill" a stranger when ordered to do so (Milgram 1963). This finding was replicated in a way by a different study on what makes soldiers more likely to shoot at the enemy. What was found was that "being told to fire" was the most significant factor in making soldiers fire their weapons (Grossman 2009). Grossman noticed that when leaders communicated a clear expectancy of their soldiers to kill, and the more intensely the order was given, the more likely the soldier was to kill (Grossman 2009). The distinction here is a leader's order of, "You know what to do." versus "Kill him!" where the latter order has an increased chance of the soldier killing. Freud was indeed right to assert that one should "never underestimate the power of the need to obey."

The second variable that increases the likelihood of killing is based on the leader's legitimacy. Dr. Milgram's legitimacy was found in his position as a tester who was able to compel 65% of people to kill a stranger. If that level of legitimacy attained that kind of obedience, then it is not hard to imagine the obedience obtained by a military officer's legitimacy. Military officers have legitimate authority granted to them by society thus they wield profound influence over soldiers and what they do (Grossman 2009). They essentially represent society's orders and the soldier will be more likely to obey military officers than an illegitimate leader. It is not just the legitimacy of the leader that increases the likelihood of killing; the legitimacy of the leader's order also matters. Illegal or unexpected orders—such as killing children—are less likely to be obeyed than legitimate, lawful orders (Grossman 2009) such as

killing enemy soldiers. The power of the need to obey is strong, but so is the resistance to killing, and unlawful orders are less likely to overcome that resistance.

The third variable that increases the soldier's probability of killing is the distance between the soldier and leader. The Milgram study is well-known, but one point that might not be as known is the distance Dr. Milgram was standing from the participant. Dr. Milgram—the leader—stood right behind the participant when he ordered them to inflict a fake lethal shock on the test subject and 65% of participants obeyed (Milgram 1963). Yet, when Dr. Milgram was not present in the room, and gave orders over the phone instead, the number of participants who obeyed dropped significantly (Milgram 1963). General S.L.A. Marshall's study found this same behavior in soldiers. When leaders were proximately close to, and encouraged soldiers to fire their weapons, nearly all soldiers did, but when leaders left the firing rate dropped to 15-20% (Marshall 1978). Without the close presence of leaders, soldiers were less likely to kill just like Dr. Milgram's participants.

The final variable in the demands of authority factor that increases killing behavior is the soldier's respect for the leader. The amount of respect the soldier has for his leader affects the likelihood that he will obey or disregard the leader's orders. In combat this is especially crucial since the leader's orders direct the flow of battle. An Israeli study found that the primary factor which ensured the soldier's will to fight was his respect for his commanding officer (Grossman 2009). The more the soldier respected the leader, the more likely he was to obey orders and keep fighting the enemy. Contrast this with an unknown or discredited leader, and the likelihood of the soldier complying in combat decreases (Grossman 2009).

The Factor of Group Absolution

The second factor that increases the soldier's likelihood of killing is group absolution. This factor stems from the group of people the soldier is with and consists of five variables: the soldier's identification with the group; the proximity of the group to the soldier; the intensity of support the group gives for killing; the number of people in the group; and the group's legitimacy. Beginning with the first variable, soldiers develop deep bonds with each other, and these bonds can be so strong that the soldier will prefer death than failing his friends (Grossman 2009). Failure to kill the enemy by aiming too high or too low, instead of shooting to kill, is the same as failing to protect your friends from an enemy who seeks to kill them. Hence, the more a soldier identifies with his group the more likely it will be that he chooses to kill. This probability increases further with the second variable as the physical distance between the soldier and the group becomes closer. Actions like failure to kill the enemy are more likely to be observed by the group the closer they are to the soldier, which increases his likelihood of killing (Grossman 2009). Grossman noted many instances of lone soldiers who came across lone enemy soldiers and neither sought to kill each other. Yet, the presence of even just one friend resulted in the soldier killing the enemy.

The third and fourth variables increase the probability of killing through the intensity of support the group gives for killing and the number of people in the group. The group's intensity of support for killing consists of two parts: anonymity and crowding effects. As studied in group psychology, when an individual is in a group the level of personal responsibility they feel drops significantly (Grossman 2009). The individual identifies more with the group and thus has a sense of anonymity that he would not feel if alone. Further, groups have an intensifying effect that increases whatever feeling is within the group—whether it is aggression, passivity, joy, or sadness (Grossman 2009). These two effects combine to enable an elevated level of killing

behavior by decreasing the soldier's feeling of responsibility and increasing his feeling of aggression. This effect escalates with the fourth variable: the more people there are in the group, the more anonymity is provided and the more intense the feeling of aggression is (Grossman 2009). However, the group could be non-aggressive which would decrease the likelihood that the soldier would choose to kill.

Group absolution's last variable that increases the likelihood a soldier will kill is the group's legitimacy. The group's legitimacy is found in how well the soldier can trust and depend upon the group. If the soldier is with "his" group he will be more likely to kill, but if he isn't with "his" group but with a different group, the likelihood the soldier will kill decreases (Grossman 2009). The resistance to killing is strong, and the likelihood that a soldier will kill for those he does not trust will not overcome that resistance. However, as that trust and dependability increase so does the legitimacy of the group, which then makes it more likely that the soldier will kill.

The Factor of Total Distance from Victim

The third factor that makes a soldier more likely to kill is the total distance between the victim and himself. This factor consists of two variables of distance—physical and emotional—which affect the soldier's likelihood of killing. Starting with physical distance, there is a spectrum of difficulty and resistance to killing that is related to how close or far the soldier is from his victim. At the farthest distance there is aerial bombing or artillery barrages, which have the lowest level of resistance to killing (Grossman 2009). Although these soldiers mentally know that what they are doing is causing death, they are so far removed from seeing the destruction they have caused that there is no sense of guilt. Yet, as the distance between soldier and victim decreases, the difficulty and resistance to killing increases. At point blank range is where soldiers often do not

kill because “when one looks an opponent in the eye, and knows that he is young or old, scared, or angry, [it is hard to deny that person is much like oneself]” (Grossman 2009, 118). At this distance soldiers see a mirror image of themselves who they are meant to kill, and will hear, see, and feel the enemy die by their hand which makes killing harder. However, that difficulty the soldier faces in denying that an enemy is like himself can be overcome by emotional distance.

Like physical distance, the closer an enemy is emotionally the harder it is to kill him. What emotional distance does is it enables the soldier to deny the humanity of his victim and allow him to rationalize and justify the kill (Grossman 2009). Emotional distance can be from cultural, moral, or social differences and mechanical equipment. Cultural distance can be created from racial, ethnic, religious or any other cultural difference that can be used to dehumanize the victim (Grossman 2009). Moral distance through legal affirmation allows the soldier to justify killing the enemy as a legal and legitimate act against a “guilty” enemy (Grossman 2009). Social differences between classes like elites, middle class, and commoners, enable soldiers to look down upon others rather than see them as equals (Grossman 2009). Finally, mechanical distance provided by thermal or night-vision sights turns the enemy into a white, black, or green blob rather than a human body (Grossman 2009).

The Factor of Target Attractiveness of Victim

The fourth factor that enables the soldier to kill is the target attractiveness of the person he is to kill, or in other words the victim. This factor consists of three variables that increase the probability a soldier will kill: the relevance of available strategies to kill; the relevance of the victim; and the payoff of killing the victim. Soldiers that have an advantage in killing the enemy without being at risk to being harmed themselves are more likely to kill than soldiers without a comparable advantage (Grossman 2009). Killing is already a challenging task and being at risk

to being killed or harmed only makes it harder. Thus, soldiers with tactical or technological advantages in strategy, such as ambushes or fighting at night against an enemy that lacks night-vision technology, gives soldiers better assurance of surviving when trying to kill the enemy (Grossman 2009).

The second variable of relevance of the victim increases the soldier's probability of killing based on threat to the soldier. Enemy soldiers, prisoners, resentful civilians, and children all have various levels of threat that affect the soldier's likelihood of killing. Enemy soldiers are highly threatening and are considered "sanctioned kills," which is easier for the soldier to rationalize and accept, thus increasing his likelihood of killing (Grossman 2009). However, killing someone that is not a threat—such as civilians or children—would be murder, which makes the soldier more resistant to killing (Grossman 2009).

The last variable of payoff affects killing behavior based on what the soldier gains and what the enemy loses from him killing the victim. In selecting from a group of enemies to kill, the soldier is most likely to kill the one who gives the greatest gain to him and greatest loss to the enemy (Grossman 2009). When there is no clear high-value target, then choosing who to kill is influenced by which enemy has the most dangerous weapon (Grossman 2009). This ensures better safety for the soldier and for his friends by removing the most dangerous threat and/or the enemy's ability to kill.

The Factor of Predisposition of the Soldier

The final factor that affects the soldier's likelihood of killing is his own predisposition to killing. This factor consists of three variables: the soldier's level of training; recent experiences he is gone through; and his temperament. Military training is based on B.F. Skinner's operant

conditioning techniques which make it more likely that the soldier will react in combat by firing at and killing the enemy (Grossman 2009). Training replicates as much as possible combat conditions, so when soldiers are on the battlefield, they will unconsciously perform the trained action of shooting to kill. As soldiers receive more training, the more likely this response will occur, thus increasing the probability that the soldier will kill.

The second variable of the soldier's predisposition increases the probability of him killing by the recent experiences he has gone through. Usually, this recent experience is the death of friends in combat. Recent deaths of friends or loved leaders can mentally defeat soldiers, but often they react with anger, which increases the probability of killing (Grossman 2009). This is comparable to revenge killing—a popular theme in culture, movies, and literature—which is a behavior displayed by soldiers also. Lastly, the soldier's temperament by itself can enable him to kill but this is rare. Of the male population there is about 2% of whom would kill without remorse when given a legitimate reason (Grossman 2009). Unlike most people who have a high resistance to killing, regardless if there is a legitimate reason to kill such as self-defense, this 2% are not resistant to killing when it is legitimate. This 2% is not to be confused with psychopaths or sociopaths since they do feel emotions—unlike psychopaths—neither does that 2% rebel against authority—unlike sociopaths (Grossman 2009). There is just something about their temperament which makes them less resistant to killing than the average person.

In summary³ the act of killing is complex and soldiers—or people in general—have high resistance to killing and will not do it of their own will. This resistance can be overcome by five factors, however: the demands of authority; group absolution; the distance between the soldier

³ A summary of Grossman's hypotheses can be found in the appendix.

and victim; the nature of the victim; and the soldier's predisposition. When present each factor increases the probability that the soldier will kill, but if the factor is absent the soldier is less likely to kill. Interestingly, this psychology behind killing has close parallels to studies on interstate conflict. The choices of posture, submit, fight, and flight are seen in state interactions within a larger pattern of aggression that can be described as a "perfect illusion of violence." Additionally, the factors that increase the soldier's likelihood of killing resemble multiple studies that have been found to increase the probability of states going to war. What follows will be a review of literature on interstate conflict that is related to the act of killing, starting with the options states have in interactions with other states. Afterwards will be a review of studies related to Grossman's five factors.

Literature Review of Interstate Conflict

The State's Options in Conflict

The choices of posture, submit, fight, and flight are similar choices found in the interactions of states in conflict. Though the words fight, flight, and submit, are better compared to war, capitulate, and settlement, in IR terms. States cannot "flee" but can surrender or yield to an opposing state, and states can come to agreements before war occurs. Further, states display a similar pattern of aggression to that of soldiers. States do not go straight to war when a conflict arises, and sometimes states do back down rather than going to war when a conflict occurs. Yet, other times when conflicts occur states do not go to war right away, but they do not back down either. Instead they proceed to act in an aggressive and competitive, but usually not violent, way towards each other much like posturing. From here the states either go to war or they do not, and the answer to that question is contested between two perspectives.

Whether this series of aggressive actions leads to war or not is fiercely debated between the differing perspectives of the spiral and deterrence models of realism. Both models claim to be correct in explaining the likelihood of war from coercive actions, with one saying that they increase the risk of war and the other that they decrease the risk of war. The spiral model follows the former argument in saying that coercive actions increase the risk of war by increasing a state's threat perception (Levy and Thompson 2011). For example, state A builds up its military which is perceived by state B to be a hostile action, and state B builds up its military as a reaction. But state A sees state B's military buildup as a hostile action with state A building up its military further, and the process repeats again. This security dilemma increases the risk of war between states because they perceive the other state's actions as a prelude to hostilities (Levy and Thompson 2011).

On the other hand, the deterrence model follows the latter argument in that states choose coercive strategies to deter war with the opposing state and keep the peace (Levy and Thompson 2011). States are assumed to be predatory, hence aggressive actions decrease the risk of war by deterring others from attacking a state willing to use force to defend itself (Levy and Thompson 2011). In this case war occurs when deterrence fails either by lack of credibility or inability to threaten a costly enough response to aggression (Levy and Thompson 2011). Both models have strong explanatory power, and both can point to wars as validation where they are correct and the other is wrong. Yet the question remains unanswered: do coercive strategies lead to war? However, the assumption is that only one model is correct all the time when in fact both could be correct depending upon the conditions of the conflict or crisis (Levy and Thompson 2011). This means that coercive strategies are not causes of war per se but are an effect of specific conditions which lead to war.

A key observation of this debate is the resemblance it has to the posturing actions of soldiers in combat. Soldiers and states choose posturing for the same reason—to avoid an actual fight/war—but posturing does not guarantee the occurrence or absence of killing or war. It is during this posturing phase when certain conditions are present does the likelihood of killing or war increase. What those conditions are that increase the probability of states going to war are comparable to the conditions Grossman identified that increase the probability soldiers will kill. The five factors of demands of authority, group absolutism, total distance, target attractiveness, and predisposition have close similarities to many IR studies on what increases the probability that states will go to war.

The Factor of Demands of Authority in International Relations

The demands of authority factor can be found in IR but requires a distinction to be made between state leaders and states that is not contrary or novel to IR. A state's leader plays a significant role on the probability of war since he is the one who makes the decision to go to war—not the state. This is not surprising but often theories and studies speak as if states are rational actors that make decisions on going to war based on certain criteria (e.g. realism, rivalry, contiguity). Not all states make the same rational decisions nor are those decisions consistent across time. An alliance to deter Nazi Germany between France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union was in those states' interests, but the Soviet Union made a treaty with Nazi Germany—a clear enemy to the Soviet Union—instead. A state should not have made that decision, but it did. A state then is not a rational actor, nor does it make decisions on going to war; states may fight wars, but it is their leaders who make the decision to start them (Lai and Slater 2006). Scholars then are right to assert that the state leader is a fundamental actor in international relations (Wolford 2007). This

means that “states” in the traditional sense consist of two parts: the state leader and the state itself. And leader-centric studies in IR parallel the variables in the demands of authority factor.

The demands of authority factor and the ways it affects the likelihood of soldiers killing is also found in IR literature. The state leader’s legitimacy, intensity of demand, proximity, and respect have been studied in some form by scholars. Beginning with the state leader’s legitimacy, a study on the timing of when state leaders initiate conflicts found that conflict is most likely to be initiated when the state leader’s legitimacy is high. Autocratic leaders initiate conflicts later in their tenure after building up support because they lack legitimacy at the start of their rule (Bueno de Mesquita [hereafter BdM] and Siverson 1995). On the other hand, democratic leaders initiate conflicts earlier in their tenure because they have the highest legitimacy then before they lose the majority coalition's support (BdM and Siverson 1995). State leaders probably recognize that states are less likely to obey a costly order such as going to war when they lack legitimacy, and therefore they make strategic choices on when to start conflicts.

The second variable of intensity of demand to kill has a counterpart in IR also. As seen in strategic rivalry, state leaders communicate to their states clearly, intensely, and expectantly that future conflict or war will happen with other states. State leaders that identify one another’s state as a competitor, the source of real or perceived military threat, and an enemy have a greater risk of going to war (Thompson 2001). State leaders communicate this explicitly to their states which can be as intense as Adolf Hitler’s threats against Poland, Islamic leader’s proclamations of wiping out Israel, or less intense such as President Bush’s declaration of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea of being the ‘Axis of Evil.’ Although the ‘intensity’ part of the demand for war is subjective in its effect, the state leader’s identification and expectancy of conflict does increase the state’s likelihood of going to war. Of all wars since 1816, 77.3% were between strategic

rivals and this percentage increased when breaking it down into different periods: 87.2% of wars in the 20th century, and 91.3% of wars in the post-1945 period were between strategic rivals (Thompson 2001).

Just as the intensity of demand to kill made killing more likely, so too does the intensity of demand for war. This could be due to a combination of what Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky described as ‘manufacturing consent’ by state leaders and Freud’s “power of the need to obey.” Autocratic and democratic state leaders have varying amounts of control over mass media, but the effect they have on gaining the consent of the state is the same. Through a series of five filters⁴, mass media institutions change how they present news stories to the public by favoring the interests and views of businesses and governments (Herman and Chomsky 2002). Constant bias in favor of the government’s perspective, the public’s acceptance of what news stories tell, added with the inability—or lack of effort—to discover if what news stories say is true, combines to ‘manufacture’ the public’s consent (Herman and Chomsky 2002). Combine this with the “power of the need to obey” and the likelihood of the state following the order to go to war increases. One could challenge the effect of the “need to obey” based on differences of scale between the individual and the state, yet when we consider the atrocities committed at the orders of state leaders like Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and hundreds of others like them, it is hard to deny that states are compliant when given orders.

The third variable of proximity between the soldier and leader can be found between states and state leaders although they differ slightly. The difference being that the distance between state leaders and states is more figurative than literal. State leaders may be hundreds of

⁴ The five filters are: size, ownership and orientation of mass media outlet, advertising license to do business, sourcing mass media news, flak and enforcers and another broad social control mechanism like “anti-communism” or “war on terror”.

miles away at the Capital, but their “presence” is still proximately close throughout the state by virtue of institutions. Institutions are technically a proxy of the state leader because it is through institutions that state leaders govern the state. Without institutions state leaders could not enforce laws, extract taxes and resources, or mobilize the state for war since there is no enforcement. Hence, it is through these institutions and their effectiveness that state leaders are “proximately” close to the state. The more institutions there are and the more effective they are the “closer” in proximity the state leader is to the state, which increases the probability that the state will go to war. This is because the state leader is capable of mobilizing—by coercion if necessary—the state to go to war. Whereas the fewer institutions there are and the less effective they are, the “further” away the state leader is. Thus, decreasing the likelihood the state will go to war. State leaders that are not capable of mobilizing or coercing the state to go to war are less likely to be obeyed by a state that is resistant to going to war.

The last variable of respect in the demands of authority factor can be found in IR but it too functions differently. A rough equivalent to Grossman’s variable of respect for the leader in IR would be the state’s support for its leader. This support affects the likelihood of the state going to war in several ways. The first is by affecting the state leader’s decision to initiate conflict. There is a common assumption that state leaders desire to stay in power, thus they will make decisions that will give them support and keep them in power (BdM and Siverson 1995; Wolford 2007). But how this support is given depends upon the size of the winning coalition and the selectorate, or in other words the regime type. The winning coalition is a group of actors that can install or take a state leader out of power while the selectorate is a group of actors that can replace the winning coalition (BdM et al 2003).

In autocratic regimes, where the winning coalition is small and the selectorate is large, a state leader can make risky, costly decisions yet stay in power. This owes to the fact that he can provide private goods to the winning coalition, who then have incentives to always support the state leader to retain access to these private goods or else be replaced by others from the selectorate (BdM et al 2003). In democratic regimes though where the winning coalition and the selectorate are large, a state leader cannot make those risky decisions. State leaders cannot provide private goods to the large winning coalition, because it would be too costly; hence, he must be careful in making decisions that will be widely supported which in turn will keep him in power (BdM et al 2003). This dynamic of how support is given has been found to affect the likelihood of conflict.

States with autocratic regimes are more likely to start conflicts than democratic regimes (Peceny and Butler 2004), but some autocratic regimes are more conflict prone than others. Personalist regimes are the most conflict prone, followed by military regimes, then party regimes (Peceny and Butler 2004). This coincides with the theorized relationship between the size of the winning coalition and selectorate on the state leader's decision to initiate conflicts as the autocratic regime size increases. While states with autocratic regimes start conflicts and go to war with any state regardless of regime type, states with democratic regimes do not go to war with states that also have democratic regimes. No two democratic states have gone to war, while autocratic and mixed dyads have gone to war plenty of times (Oneal and Russett 1999; Peceny and Butler 2004). Reasons as to why this are contested: some point to norms while others to conflict reducing mechanisms in democracies (Oneal and Russett 1999). Whatever the case may be, it is clear that the ways in which state leaders receive support affects the likelihood of the state going to war.

The Factor of Group Absolution in International Relations

The similarities between Grossman's factor of demands of authority and that of studies in IR extend further into the factor of group absolution. The factor of group absolution and its variables are quite similar to studies in IR on alliances and their effects on the risk of war. The intensity of support, the number in the group, the group's legitimacy, and the identification with the group are similar to various studies on alliances and the probability of war. An ally's intensity of support for war can be seen in several studies. For example, it is hypothesized that allies may encourage or compel states to go to war because of their interest in the spoils of war (Leeds 2005). On the other side, an ally may view involvement in a war as undesirable, thus they could discourage a state from going to war (Leeds 2005). It makes sense that the effect of encouraging or discouraging the decision to go to war is bound to increase with the number of allies that a state has. In any case, the presence of one ally, not to mention multiple allies, increases the risk of war by making political bargaining between an initiating state and target state more difficult to achieve without war (Leeds 2005).

The intensity of support for war is also found in studies that look at the type of alliance a state has. There are several types of alliances that give different promises of aid such as neutrality, nonaggression, consultation, and defensive or offensive support (Leeds 2003). Neutrality and offensive cooperation alliances are found to increase the likelihood a state will initiate conflict because of the ally's support for war or at least the prospect that it will not assist the target state fight the war (Leeds 2003). Like soldiers on the battlefield, states are more likely to go to war when allies are supportive of it, but less likely when allies are not.

The variable of legitimacy of the group is also found in IR and does affect the probability of the state going to war. Legitimacy is the foundation of an alliance and can either make or

break it since without legitimacy an alliance is just a piece of paper. This in turn will significantly impact the likelihood a state will go to war, since an alliance with a state whose leader has a reputation of reneging on alliance agreements is bound to be seen as void of legitimacy (Gibler 2008), thereby reducing a state's confidence in initiating conflict. But when the allied leader has a reputation of honoring alliance agreements, the alliance's legitimacy is sure (Gibler 2008), which would be encouraging for state leaders looking to go to war. Often when the conditions of providing support in an alliance are met, allies do honor their commitments 75% of the time (Leeds, Long, and Mitchell 2000). Thus, a state that has a legitimate alliance it knows is reliable will be more likely to go to war than a state with an alliance that lacks legitimacy.

The fourth variable of identification with the group can be found in IR also. There are several ways states identify with one another based on similarities of their culture or security interests, which can affect the likelihood of the state going to war. States can be highly cooperative with other states based on similarities in culture, race and language, or shared interests (Thompson 2001). Shared interests are a common basis for forming alliances in the first place (Kang 2017) and it is found that states that are culturally similar, or have a common enemy, are more likely to form an alliance (Gibler 2008). Moreover, the closer these interests and identities align, the more influence they will have on making decisions to initiate wars. A state that believes to have a high level of shared interests with an ally or believes that the ally is an ardent supporter of it, creates a moral hazard on the decision to initiate conflict (Zagare 2011). A moral hazard occurs because closely shared interests can allow a state to interpret dubious conditions of general military assistance from the alliance agreement in a more favorable light, thus leading the state to expect support from the ally (Kang 2017). Findings do show that the

decision to initiate conflicts does increase as the state's level of identification with the ally increases (Kang 2017). Finally, the Grossman's last variable of proximity to the group lacks an equivalent in the field of IR.

The variable of proximity between the soldier and the group does not appear to have an equivalent in IR literature. I have been unable to find a study that definitively shows states are more likely to go to war when it has geographically close allies, and even if there was such a study, there are cases of geographically distant allies that have gone to war such as the Tripartite Pact between Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan. What seems to be important for increasing the risk of war is not so much the distance between the state and its ally, but how strong the ally is. Having a weak ally in a war against an adversary is better than nothing, yet a weak ally would reduce the risk of war onset since it would not be able to provide much assistance. In contrast, the stronger an ally is the more assistance it can provide, thereby increasing the chance of success when initiating a war. An initiating state then is more likely to start a conflict as the strength of its ally increases. One study does support this relationship with states being more likely to initiate conflicts as the ally's strength increases (Kang 2017).

Although one variable does not make an exact correlation between Grossman's study and studies in IR, the factor of groups and alliances is still closely related between soldiers and states in how it affects their behavior.

The Factor of Total Distance in International Relations

The factor of distance is also comparable in how it affects the behavior of soldiers and states. Distance is well studied in IR on how it affects state's conflict behavior, but physical distance works differently for states than it does for soldiers. However, emotional distance works the same for both soldiers and states. The functional equivalent of emotional distance in IR studies is

culture. Though controversial, culture is associated with an increased likelihood of conflict between states. As posited by Samuel Huntington (1993), states from different civilizations are likely to get into conflict over differences in culture, tradition, religion, and other dimensions of civilization. Civilizational differences create disputes over other issues varying from trade, regime type, spheres of influence, immigration, and human rights (Huntington 1993). These civilizational characteristics that unify and organize people are not easily altered or bent, since they are assumed to be what make Chinese people Chinese, Western people Western, Russian people Russian and so forth. Hence, disputes between states of different civilizations are less likely to be resolved peacefully, due to states being unable to compromise what they are. Thus, just as emotional distance makes soldiers more likely to kill, so too does emotional distance make states more likely to go to war.

Although emotional distance works the same for soldiers and states, physical distance works differently for states on war likelihood. For the soldier, the likelihood of killing increases as the distance between him and the victim increases, but for the state the likelihood of war increases as the distance between it and the enemy state decreases. Reasons given as to why this is varies from states having greater chances of conflicting interests with neighboring states to states having greater ease in projecting power. States that share a border have shared access to physical or maritime territory, which could have tangible or intangible value, therefore leading to conflicting interests on who controls that territory (Bremer 1992). Thus, contiguity increases the risk of war because of a greater likelihood of territorial disputes, which are found to be more war prone than other types of disputes (Vasquez and Henehan 2001).

The other reason as to why states are more likely to go to war as their physical distance decreases, is based on the costs of projecting power. Power projection is intimately tied to war

because if a state cannot send its military forces outside its own borders, the state cannot initiate a war. Hence, the capability to project power is a necessary—but not sufficient—condition to initiate war (Markowitz and Fariss 2013), and distance has a significant impact on power projection. Boulding's (1963) loss of strength gradient demonstrates that as the distance between states increase the effectiveness of a state's power decreases. Transporting soldiers and equipment, producing weaponry, and maintenance costs grow as distance increases, therefore, a state's total war-waging capability against another state decreases with distance because of costs. Hence a state has a higher probability of going to war with a contiguous state that it has conflicts of interest with because of cheaper costs (Boulding 1963).

However, when the costs of power projection go down states can project power further away. A state can reduce the costs of power projection in two ways. The first is through technological innovation such as railroads, aircraft, steam and diesel engines, and other innovations that reduce the cost of transporting, maintaining, and resupplying armies far from home (Markowitz and Fariss 2013). The second way a state can reduce the costs of power projection is through developing its economy's scale and wealth (Markowitz and Fariss 2013). Logically, the more a state can spend the more power it can project abroad at greater distances. Combining these effects together enables a state to project power at increasing distances. Findings support this relationship of states projecting power at further distances as the costs of projecting power decrease. States that develop and can afford large navies have an increased likelihood of MIDs with non-contiguous states (Crisher 2017). Further, as a state's GDP and technological innovation increase, MIDs occur at greater distances from the state (Markowitz and Fariss 2013). As can be seen, distance impacts the probability that a state will go to war by

increasing either opportunities for conflict or costs of projecting power abroad. Unlike soldiers, a state must be closer to the enemy state to increase the likelihood of going to war.

The Factor of Target Attractiveness in International Relations

The fourth factor of the target attractiveness of the victim is related to various studies in IR also. The relevance of the victim, the payoff, and the relevance of available strategies are likewise found in IR studies. States, like soldiers, determine the relevance of the target based on how threatening it is. The rivalry literature refers to domestic audiences—the state—as perceiving certain states as rivals through policy inertia and the inculcation of rivalry hostility (Klein et al 2006) independently of state leaders. This separate rivalry perception is best seen by the state being likely to punish its leader for cooperating with a rival state (Colaresi 2004). As can be seen, both states and state leaders perceive and expect hostilities from certain states, and these perceptions are separate from one another. It can then be assumed that states are more likely to go to war against other states they perceive to be threatening than against a state that is not perceived as a threat.

It is unsurprising that payoff is a similar variable for soldiers and states that affects the probability of killing and war. Both killing and war have risks and costs which are not worthwhile unless the benefits outweigh them. Two common explanations in IR assess this variable of payoff for states and have different expectations. The most straightforward study on payoff for states is the positive expected utility explanation where war is a rational choice if both sides expect to gain more from war than they would lose from remaining at peace (BdM 1985). This explanation's flaw is that it does not explain why states would be unable to find a settlement before going to war. This is where the second explanation, the bargaining model of war, comes into play. Both states would prefer not to fight a war but are prevented from finding a bargain

either due to private information and incentives to misrepresent it or commitment problems. States have private information on their own capabilities but lack similar information on the enemy state's capability, and since neither side can credibly reveal their true capabilities—thus showing which side would win a war—due to the incentive to misrepresent capabilities to gain an advantage in the bargaining process, a settlement cannot be found (Fearon 1995). While commitment problems arise from the inability of a state to convincingly say it will not use an advantage it has now against an enemy state in the future, thus the enemy state will go to war from fear of the peace it would have to accept when the opposing state grows stronger from that advantage (Fearon 1995).

The relevance of strategies variable and its effects are found in IR too. There are many strategies state leaders can choose from to achieve their goals or resolve disputes that do not require going to war with another state. Often, state leaders prefer non-violent means since diplomatic and economic tools are less costly and risky than military force (Levy and Thompson 2011). For example, trade can be established with another state to acquire needed resources instead of waging a costly war to capture resource rich territory. Or, disputes over control of resource rich territory can be resolved by a deal to cooperate on extracting resources for mutual gain, rather than fighting for control. In these hypothetical cases the relevance of available strategies decreases the likelihood of war with the option of a non-violent alternative that achieves the same result of acquiring resources. However, these non-violent alternatives do not always work, are exhausted, or are not even available, leaving the option of war as “a continuation of political activity by other means” (Clausewitz [1832] 1976, 87).

Even with the strategy of war there are several options to choose from based on the state's capability. Capability not only means the ability to sustain the costs of war but also the

technology or military strategy to wage war. The relevance of available strategies to use force then depends upon how capable a state is. States that have an offensive advantage in capability from technology or geography might be better served to attack rather than defend (Fearon 1995). If a state is not capable enough to destroy an enemy state's resource base, it can still resort to targeting its military forces (Kadera and Morey 2008). Or a state may even be capable enough to not even use force and just resort to a peaceful rivalry with the enemy state by overcoming the enemy through superior military and economic growth (Kadera and Morey 2008). Even then, the risk of war depends upon how important that goal is to state leaders and states that they would be willing to pay the costs of war.

There are many disputes and goals states contend over, but some are more likely to increase the probability of war than others. Instead of broad goals like security, state leaders and states have specific issues and goals they want to achieve that vary in salience (Hensel et al 2008). What determines the level of salience for an issue is quite idiosyncratic among state leaders and states and is not generalizable across state leaders or states (Hensel et al 2008). These issues can be tangible like control of territory or intangible like cultural beliefs, but the more salient the issue is the more willing state leaders and states are to go to war for it (Hensel et al 2008). Thus, issues with low salience that were unable to be resolved with non-forceful measures are less likely to be fought over, compared to issues with high salience that are unresolved.

The Factor of Predisposition in International Relations

Finally, the last factor of predisposition and how it affects the likelihood of killing has parallels in IR studies. Like the soldier's predisposition, the state's predisposition to war is also found in its capabilities and the recent events it has gone through. However, the variable of capability has proven elusive on how it affects the risk of war. On the one hand, the power parity hypothesis

argues that two states with equal power are unlikely to go to war and is a cause of peace (Levy and Thompson 2011). Since the two states know that the outcome of war would be uncertain and incredibly costly, neither state would seek to engage in war, and this is supported by various studies (Leeds 2005; Mitchell and Prins 2004).

On the other hand, there is the power preponderance hypothesis, in which states that are clearly unequal in their capability are less likely of going to war (Levy and Thompson 2011). The idea is that the stronger state is satisfied with the status quo and the weaker state is incapable of changing it, thus it accepts its position and peace is maintained; this is supported by assorted studies also (Hensel et al 2008; Bremer 1992, Barbieri 1996). However, the one consistent factor is that major powers go to war more often than minor powers. Although there are various findings on how capability affects the probability of war, generally the more capability the state has the more likely it will go to war.

The predisposition of the state going to war is also affected by recent events. New state leaders that come into power have incentives to initiate conflicts to build a resolute reputation (Wolford 2007). Domestic unrest in the state can be wielded by state leaders to initiate conflicts, especially against rival states (Mitchell and Prins 2004). Rival states that experience MIDs are found to go to war 90% of the time when the sixth MID occurs (Klein et al 2006). In addition, conflict over high value issues that are handled in a militarized fashion increase the risk of conflict also (Mitchell and Thies 2011).

Lastly, unlike the soldier, the state does not have the temperament variable Grossman identified. The equivalent of temperament for the state would be its political culture, a variable associated with an increased likelihood of war, and has been studied in IR. The idea that certain political cultures are more war prone than others has been tested but was found to be

insignificant (Wright 1965, 15). This is not to be confused with Huntington's thesis of states from different civilizations going to war because of culture. The clash of civilizations argument predicted an increased risk of war between two state's cultures, not a state's culture itself increasing the risk of war.

As a final similarity between Grossman's study and studies in IR, there has been an attempt at creating a model to understand the probability of war by combining multiple variables associated with the risk of war. Senese and Vasquez's (2005) steps-to-war model does this by using several variables related to conflict to predict the probability of war occurring. This model combined alliances, arms races, rivalry, territorial disputes, realism, issue salience and domestic politics into a coherent theory on the probability of war breaking out between states. As states interact over a territorial dispute, there are certain strategies available, and if the leader and his followers subscribe to realism, they will choose strategies like creating alliances, taking a hard line, or building up military forces to resolve the dispute (Senese and Vasquez 2005). These strategies could happen in any order, but as each one is chosen the probability of war increases.

Their findings were mostly supported with territorial disputes, arms races, and rivalry increasing the probability of war (Senese and Vasquez 2005). Interestingly, the presence of alliances did not increase the risk of war unless the arms race variable was dropped (Senese and Vasquez 2005). Even more interesting were their findings when the model was tested in certain time periods. The steps-to-war model worked as expected for all variables between 1816-1945 but not between 1946-1992. Alliances in this period had the opposite effect, and arms races were insignificant for war likelihood (Senese and Vasquez 2005). Although the steps-to-war model explains war probability for the 1816-1945 period it is not as helpful in explaining war probability in the era after World War Two.

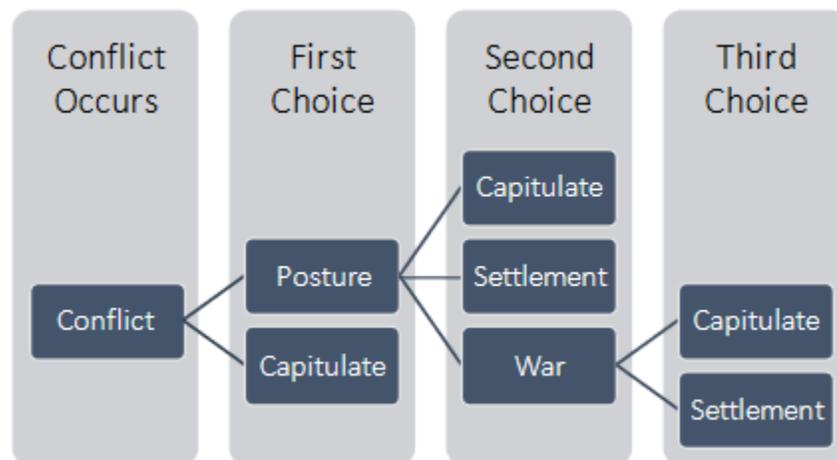
There are many similarities and several differences between Grossman's study on killing and IR studies on war that can be explained by looking at what war is: war is organized groups of people choosing to kill each other. The act of killing and the act of going to war are essentially the same thing just at different scales. It is this difference in scale that accounts for the dissimilarities in Grossman's variables with IR studies' variables. For example, for an individual to be more likely to kill he must be further away from his victim, but for an organized group of people numbering in the millions to hundreds of millions to be more likely to kill another group of comparable size, they must be closer.

A significant implication of this observation in similarities between killing and war is that the cause of war is human nature—a contentious argument in IR (Levy and Thompson 2011; Waltz 1959). However, this contention is largely based on misunderstandings of human nature. The classical realist understanding of human nature is that it is aggressive and predatory, which is why wars occur (Levy and Thompson 2011). The key assumption about this thought though is that human nature is aggressive to the point that people willfully kill. As seen in Grossman's study this is not the case; there is such a high resistance to killing that people will only be more likely to kill under certain conditions. Realism's understanding of human nature is flawed in that sense; thus, it is better to say that human nature is aggressive and predatory, but not to the point of going to war and only under certain conditions are states more likely to go to war. As discussed above, those conditions are comparable to the conditions that make soldiers more likely to kill. Indeed, Grossman's anatomy of killing can be readily applied to IR creating an "anatomy of initiation" to explain why states go to war. In other words, the act of killing is the picture that has been missing to put all the pieces of the war puzzle together.

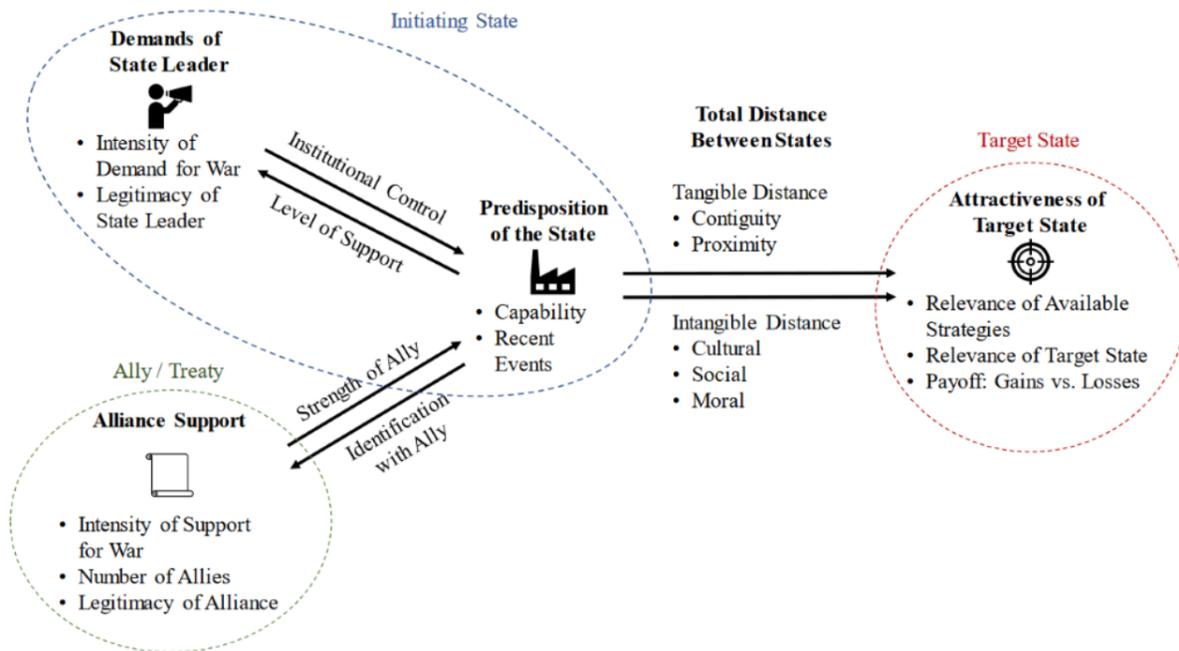
A New Theory on Interstate War Initiation

The state leader and state are separate actors who shape the decision on whether to posture, capitulate, make a settlement, or go to war when a conflict with another state occurs. Although the state does not make the decision, it plays an influential role on what the state leader chooses since the state can punish its leader. The state leader makes a strategic choice from the available options on what will be most beneficial and what the state will most likely accept. When a conflict occurs the first choice is between the options of posture or capitulate. Should posture be chosen, and it fails to deter the enemy state or escalates conflict further, the second choice is to capitulate, make a settlement, or go to war. Since states are highly resistant to going to war the last option is difficult to choose except when five factors are present that overcome that resistance: the demands of state leaders; the predisposition of the state; alliance support; total distance between states; and the attractiveness of the target state. The presence of each factor increases the probability the state will go to war, rather than capitulating or making a settlement, but it is not a guarantee that the state will go to war when all five factors are present. If war is chosen, then the last choice is between capitulating or making a settlement, thus ending the war.

State Behavior Conflict Pattern and Choices



Anatomy of Initiation Model



Anatomy of Initiation Hypotheses

Demands of State Leader:

- The more/less legitimate a state's leader is the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less intensely and clearly a state leader calls for conflict the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less institutional control a state leader has the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less support a state leader has the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.

Alliance Support:

- The more/less legitimate the alliance is the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less a state identifies with its allies the more/less likely it is to go to war.
- The stronger/weaker allies are the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less allies a state has the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The more/less intensely allies give support for war the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.

Predisposition of the State:

- The more/less capability the state has the more/less likely it is to go to war.
- Recent events the state has gone through make it more/less likely to go to war.

Total Distance Between States:

- The closer/further in tangible distance the target state is the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.
- The further/closer in intangible distance the target state is the more/less likely it is the state will go to war.

Attractiveness of Target State:

- A state with/without available coercive strategies is more/less likely to go to war.
- A state without/with available non-coercive strategies is more/less likely to go to war.
- A state that perceives/does not perceive the target state as a relevant target is more/less likely to go to war.
- If the payoff of war is more/less beneficial than not going to war the state is more/less likely to go to war.

Anatomy of Initiation Research Design

To test this theory, I decided to apply it to a qualitative case study of Japan-U.S. relations between 1853-1941 to see if it better explains Japan's decisions when it became embroiled in conflict with the U.S. during this time period. It will be a historical overview with closer attention given to three conflictual episodes in Japan-U.S. relations between 1853-1941. The anatomy of initiation theory will be applied to these conflictual episodes to see if it explains Japan's decisions in each conflict. I will be focusing on the effects of the five factors on Japan's decision to go to war and not on the other decisions of capitulate, settlement, and posture. Japan certainly chose these other options, and they will be mentioned, but the analysis will focus on the five factors' effects on Japan's decision of going to war or not. Although this case study will be primarily qualitative, quantitative data will be used when possible when I apply the theory to the periods of conflict as additional supporting evidence. If there is no dataset or information is lacking for variables, I will give an interpreted answer based upon what information is available.

To say that a factor is "present" will be determined upon if its variables are "present," which will be based on information gathered from datasets and my own interpretation when

necessary. I believe that at least 60% of a factor's variables must be present to say that the factor is indeed present. For example, this means that for the factor of 'demands of state leader' to be present only one of its variables can be absent. For the factors of 'predisposition of the state' and 'total distance between states' that have only two variables, both variables must be present for the factor to be deemed present. Because this is the first time this theory is being tested, I chose the 60% threshold to avoid being too liberal in testing since two factors have only two variables each. I also chose it to avoid being too conservative since 60% would allow for one or two variables to be missing in other factors that have more variables.

Overview of Japan-U.S. Relations prior to 1853

Contact between Japan and the U.S. prior to 1853 was practically nonexistent despite U.S. efforts to establish relations. From 1790 to 1853, 27 U.S. ships visited Japan but were turned away immediately—one time with cannon fire (LaFeber 1998, 10). Japan was still under its *sakoku* policy, or closed country, and fiercely resisted all foreign powers attempts to open it up. The only Westerners that were allowed contact with Japan were the Dutch, and even then, it was only through an artificial island off Nagasaki's shores (LaFeber 1998, 8). Although Japan cut itself off from the outside world, it was not ignorant of international affairs or events. Through its connections with the Dutch, Japan learned of news from the outside and were up to date with world events and even the domestic affairs of the U.S. (LaFeber 1998, 15). Thus, Japan was aware of the growing threat to its security in the 1840's and 1850's as European powers sought to exploit China after Great Britain's victory in the Opium War (LaFeber 1998, 9). A key factor of Japan's knowledge of international affairs and the U.S. is that it came from the Dutch. Inevitably this created biased information about the world and especially about Americans. The

Dutch supported the U.S. during its War of Independence in the 1770's, so any information Japan received about Americans was shed in a positive light (LaFeber 1998, 15).

Japan may have been up to date with the world's affairs, but the world was left in the dark about affairs in Japan. Had European and American powers known of Japan's inner turmoil, they just might have pressed harder for Japan to open up earlier than 1854. From the 1750's to 1850's Japan was experiencing economic, social, and political problems and changes at all levels. The Shogun was increasing taxes and borrowing money from Japan's populace to pay for economic problems, natural disasters, and his lavish lifestyle (LaFeber 1998, 16). The daimyo also increased taxes and borrowed money from the Japanese people who were already suffering under from famine, the Shogun's taxes, and increasing inflation (LaFeber 1998, 16-7). Amidst these economic issues a new merchant class, the *Chonin*, arose who wanted to destroy feudal restrictions on trade, land, and production (LaFeber 1998, 16). Thus, Tokugawa rule was being internally eroded, and this process was only accelerated with the arrival of Commodore Perry in 1853 (LaFeber 1998, 17).

First Conflict: Commodore Perry's Arrival

Commodore Perry's fleet of four warships, two of which were the new steam type, took the traditional route to Japan through the Atlantic, around the Cape of Good Hope, across the Indian Ocean, and then to Japan to open it up—by force if necessary (LaFeber 1998, 13). Japan was aware of the U.S.'s warships coming to its shores—thanks to the Dutch—but were completely surprised at how quickly they arrived (LaFeber 1998, 13). Perry's fleet left the U.S. on November 24th, 1852 and arrived on July 8th, 1853, sailing straight into Edo (Tokyo) Bay rather than the designated island off Nagasaki's shores (LaFeber 1998, 13). Perry gave President Fillmore's letter desiring diplomatic relations with Japan to Japanese government officials, but

Japan's government sought to stall and wait out Perry (LaFeber 1998, 13). Perry expected this, however, and swore to return within a year to receive Japan's reply (LaFeber 1998, 13).

A number of officials in Japan's government were willing to go to war with the U.S. but understood that they lacked the capability to fight (LaFeber 1998, 14). Japan virtually lacked a proper navy due to the *sakoku* policy that banned building large ships and lacked a modern military to compare with Perry's troops (LaFeber 1998, 14). Understanding that Japan lacked the time to build up its military, the Japanese government agreed to a treaty with the U.S. when Perry sailed into Edo Bay again on February 24th, 1854 with three additional warships (LaFeber 1998, 14). This led to a rise of internal challengers who fought for control, with some areas such as Choshu and Satsuma, directly challenging the Japanese government (LaFeber 1998, 18).

Analysis of First Conflict

Factor	Variable	Present
Demands of State Leader	State Leader Legitimacy	Yes
	Intensity of Demand for War	No
	Institutional Control	No
	Support for State Leader	No
Alliance Support	Alliance Legitimacy	No
	Number of Allies	No
	Intensity of Support for War	No
	Strength of Ally	No
	Identification with Ally	No
Total Distance Between States	Tangible Distance	No
	Intangible Distance	Yes
Predisposition of the State	Capability	No
	Recent Events	Yes
Attractiveness of Target State	Relevance of War Strategies	No
	Relevance of Target State	No
	Payoff	No

Number of factors present	0/5
Japan's Decision	Capitulate

Demands of State Leader: Not Present

The Shogun, Tokugawa Ieyoshi, was in power for 16 years before Commodore Perry's arrival in Edo Bay. This gave Ieyoshi plenty of opportunity to build up his legitimacy to be able to order Japan to go to war, as the average prewar tenure of authoritarian leaders was 5.66 years (BdM and Siverson 1995). Ieyoshi did not see the U.S. as a threat, enemy, or competitor prior to Perry's arrival as can be seen in Thompson's (2001) table of strategic rivalries, nor did Ieyoshi communicate any expectation of hostilities with the U.S. to Japan. He also lacked institutional control of Japan because Choshu and Satsuma were never fully under the Shogunate's rule (LaFeber 1998, 18) and there was a lack of institutions for mass mobilization until 1873 (LaFeber 1998, 35). Finally, the Shogun lacked the necessary support from Japan to go to war after years of heavy taxation, economic, social, and political problems.

Alliance Support: Not Present

Obviously, Japan lacked any alliance support because of the two-century *sakoku* policy. Hence, this factor was not present.

Total Distance Between States: Not Present

Japan and the U.S. had no direct or indirect contiguity (COW Project v3.2 and v3.1) and were separated by thousands of miles that Japan was unable to project power across. Thus, the variable of tangible distance is not present. Intangible distance is present due to vast differences in morals, society, and culture with the U.S.

Predisposition of the State: Not Present

The national military capabilities dataset lacks information for Japan prior to 1860 (Singer et al 1972), but it clearly lacked the military and economic capability to go to war with the U.S. (LaFeber 1998, 14), thus the variable of capability is not present. The variable of recent events is present due to Commodore Perry's arrival.

Attractiveness of Target State: Not Present

Japan's government lacked coercive and non-coercive strategies beyond stalling in response to the U.S. (LaFeber 1998, 13-5). It can be assumed that the state of Japan did not see the U.S. as a relevant target due to the pro-American information it received from the Dutch (LaFeber 1998, 15). A war with the U.S. was too costly for Japan, thus this variable was not present either.

Japan's Decision: Capitulate

The U.S. initiated a conflict with Japan by threatening to use force to open diplomatic relations with Japan. Japan's first choice was between posturing and capitulating, and because none of the factors were present for Japan, it chose to capitulate instead of posturing.

Overview of Japan-U.S. Relations: 1854-1915

Japan underwent immense transformation in this time period that launched it into the ranks of major powers on the world stage. Japan's army was remodeled to replicate Prussia's military, a modern battle fleet was built off the British Royal Navy's model, telegraph service and railways were built nationwide, factories and industry received immense state support to develop, and copied similar industrial processes to break dependence on foreign suppliers (LaFeber 1998, 35-6). By 1894 Japan could muster a quarter-million soldiers; its navy had 28 steamships at the

ready and had the factories to build more ships and weapons (LaFeber 1998, 47). Japan had also built 2,000 miles of railroads, 4,000 miles of telegraph lines, and had a growing merchant fleet of 100,000 tons of steam powered vessels (LaFeber 1998, 46).

With this new power Japan began to use it and took the Ryukyus in 1879 and the island of Formosa (Taiwan) in 1895, which China claimed as its own (LaFeber 1998, 44). It further dismantled China's hegemony on Korea with force and established diplomatic and trade relations with Korea, seeking to exploit it (LaFeber 1998, 44-5). It even waged a successful war against China that can be described as too successful since European powers intervened to prevent Japan from holding the strategically important Liaotung Peninsula (LaFeber 1998, 51). In less than five decades Japan changed from a medieval society to an imperialist power, a change that did not go unnoticed by the U.S. By 1897 the U.S. was sending its warships to the Pacific Ocean in fears that Japan would annex Hawaii (LaFeber 1998, 56). However, Japan did not see the U.S. as a threat during this time (LaFeber 1998, 47). In fact, Japan-U.S. relations from 1868-1900 can be described as amiable (LaFeber 1998, 32). It was not until after 1900 that the relationship turned for the worse.

Second Conflict: The 21-Demands

Relations soured primarily because of Japan's financial dependency on the U.S. and access to Chinese markets. This dependency was especially acute as Japan received well over half of its funding to fight the 1905 Russo-Japanese war from U.S. loans (LaFeber 1998, 81). Japan had to borrow heavily from the U.S. due to it being low in resources and capital and this left it in the unfavorable position of being weak to U.S. pressure. Japan desired to free itself of U.S. dependency and how it aimed to do that was to gain an advantageous foothold in Chinese markets. Yet, this could not be achieved due to the open-door policy in China where Japan was

not able to compete with the U.S. in a free market. Japan made moves to close off access to Manchuria, which led to clashes with the U.S. that expanded as racism fueled further hostilities and led to negligent treatment of Japanese civilians in California (LaFeber 1998, 89).

When World War One erupted it provided Japan an opportunity to close the open-door policy in China while the world was occupied with more immediate concerns. In 1915 Japan secretly issued China its 21-demands that would give it immense leverage in China, if not near control over China due to the last set of demands which would force China to hire Japanese political, military, and economic advisers and build three railways between the Yangtze river and the Pacific Ocean (LaFeber 1998, 109). This last set of demands would essentially end the open-door policy and give Japan exclusive access to Chinese markets. Japan believed neither European nor American powers could prevent this, and indeed the U.S. had few options as it needed Japanese cooperation in California, Asia, and Europe (LaFeber 1998, 111). The U.S. conceded to most of the 21-demands except for the last set that would end the open-door policy and U.S. access to China. The U.S. pressured Japan to drop the last set of demands but recognized Japan's "special relations" with China by agreeing to the Lansing-Ishii agreement in 1917 (LaFeber 1998, 115).

Analysis of Second Conflict

Factor	Variable	Present
Demands of State Leader	State Leader Legitimacy	Yes
	Intensity of Demand for War	Yes
	Institutional Control	Yes
	Support for State Leader	No
Alliance Support	Alliance Legitimacy	No
	Number of Allies	No
	Intensity of Support for War	No
	Strength of Ally	No

	Identification with Ally	No
Total Distance Between States	Tangible Distance	Yes
	Intangible Distance	Yes
Predisposition of the State	Capability	Yes
	Recent Events	No
Attractiveness of Target State	Relevance of War Strategies	No
	Relevance of Target State	Yes
	Payoff	No
Number of factors present	2/5	
Japan's Decision	Settlement	

Demands of State Leaders: Present

Japan became a constitutional monarchy after 1890 until 1912 when the era of “Taisho democracy” began. At the time of the 21-demands in 1915, Okuma Shigenobu was serving as Japan’s prime minister who came into office in 1914. Okuma’s prewar tenure is within the 2.57-year average for democratic leaders before going to war as found in BdM and Siverson’s (1995) study, thus state leader legitimacy is present. The intensity of demand for war is present since in 1915 the Japanese government did view the U.S. as a strategic rival (Thompson 2001) and did communicate an expectation of hostilities such as in 1913 when a Japanese politician riled up a crowd of 20,000 people to send the Japanese fleet to California in order to protect Japanese citizens (LaFeber 1998, 105). Institutional control is also present due to the Japanese government’s expansion of institutions such as military conscription. Okuma did not have support for going to war because Japan was still heavily reliant on the U.S. for loans and natural resources (LaFeber 1998, 94).

Alliance Support: Not Present

Japan did have an alliance with the U.K., but it was not directed against the U.S., nor was it able to be used in such a way as to go to war with the U.S. Thus, alliance support is not present.

Total Distance Between States: Present

Japan and the U.S. became indirectly contiguous with the U.S.'s territorial gain of the Philippines in 1898 (COW Project v3.2 and v3.1). Japan could project power and reach the Philippines, but whether it could project power across the Pacific Ocean and reach the U.S. is another question. Regardless, because Japan could threaten the U.S. with force in the Philippines, tangible distance is present. Intangible distance is still present but if anything, the distance increased further due to racism: California institutionalized racist policies against Japanese people such as the Webb-Heney Alien Land Act in 1913, which only confirmed the suspicions of high-ranking Japanese politicians, like Yamagata Aritomo, that a race war between whites and yellows was on the horizon (LaFeber 1998, 101-2).

Predisposition of the State: Not Present

By 1910 Japan was capable of landing 100,000 soldiers within a week on the Philippines and had a modern battle fleet that ranked the world's fifth largest that could challenge the U.S. for dominance in the Pacific Ocean (LaFeber 1998, 89-92). The U.S. quietly acknowledge this and withdrew its navy back to Hawaii as a final line where it could defend its interests in the Pacific from Hawaii (LaFeber 1998, 96). Japan may have been capable of going to war, but it certainly lacked the capability to wage war for very long: the U.S.'s CINC score in 1915 was a little over eight times greater than Japan's (Singer et al 1972). Japan still had the capability to go to war, however, so the variable is present. There were no recent events that Japan experienced that would increase its likelihood of war with the U.S. There was the issue of treatment of Japanese

civilians in California that could count as a recent event, but considering that this type of issue has the lowest probability of states going to war over (Vasquez and Henehan 2001) and it wasn't militarized, which increases the risk of conflict (Mitchell and Thies 2011), it is not considered to be a recent event and not present.

Attractiveness of Target State: Not Present

Japan lacked coercive strategies to use against the U.S. since it was heavily dependent on the U.S. and did not want to lose its support. However, Japan did have available non-coercive strategies by agreeing to respect the U.S.'s interests over the open-door policy in China. By 1915 the state of Japan did see the U.S. as a relevant target due to the U.S.'s treatment of Japanese civilians and that from 1905-1908 there was popular speculation that the U.S. and Japan would go to war (LaFeber 1998, 89). The costs of war with the U.S. outweighed the benefits as Japan had no one else to turn to for loans and natural resources during World War One.

Japan's Decision: Settlement

Japan initiated a conflict with the U.S. by issuing the 21-demands in 1915 to China that threatened U.S. interests. The U.S. responded by posturing with the stance that the U.S., "would not surrender its rights in China" (LaFeber 1998, 111). For the next two years Japan and the U.S. postured over this conflict, but due to Japan's dependence on the U.S., Japan's posturing failed, and it had to make a choice of capitulate, settlement, or war. Only two factors, the demands of state leader and total distance between states, were present at the time. Japan chose to make a settlement with the U.S. as it had no interest in going to war nor did it have an interest in capitulating and losing an advantageous position in China.

Overview of Japan-U.S. Relations: 1916-1941

Japan-U.S. relations continued to go downhill from 1916-1941 over many reasons: the U.S.'s rejection of Japan's racial equality clause in the League of Nations (LaFeber 1998, 123); Japan's moves to end the open-door policy in China (LaFeber 1998, 136); the U.S.'s 1924 Immigration Act that excluded Japanese immigrants from citizenship (LaFeber 1998, 144); Japan's aggressive expansion into Manchuria and then China (LaFeber 1998, 164-9); U.S. aid for China's fight against Japan (LaFeber 1998, 196); Japan's continuing expansion into Indo-China (LaFeber 1998, 200); and U.S. sanctions on resources Japan needed (LaFeber 1998, 200). The downhill trend was only enhanced as Japan's military gained more influence at the government and grass-roots levels: the military held veto power over the creation of new cabinet governments; held 28% of civilian posts; and led a powerful grass-roots organization, the Imperial Military Reserve Association (LaFeber 1998, 163). Interestingly, public opinion started to be more inclined towards nationalistic, aggressive policies (LaFeber 1998, 163).

Third Conflict: U.S. Embargoes Oil to Japan

The U.S. decision to embargo oil to Japan was only the last of a series of attempts by the U.S. to deter Japanese aggression in Asia. President Roosevelt did not intend to put an oil embargo on Japan but only a sanction on high-grade aviation gasoline (LaFeber 1998, 200). His order was misinterpreted by Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson who oversaw the gasoline sanction, and emplaced an embargo instead (LaFeber 1998, 200). The U.S. supplied 60% of Japan's oil and Japanese leaders concluded they would not be able to continue the war in China after two years unless they secured resources, to which they moved forces into southern Indochina (LaFeber 1998, 200). A month later President Roosevelt found out what Acheson did but could not rescind the embargo because it would look like the U.S. was giving into Japan's continued aggression (LaFeber 1998, 200).

In September 1941 Japan attempted for the last time to find an agreement with the U.S. before going to war, but due to both sides being unable to find an agreement, it ultimately failed. In late November Japan prepared and sent six aircraft carriers towards Hawaii to launch a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor (LaFeber 1998, 211). An Imperial Conference was held in December for final approval of the attack, and Japanese officials were further encouraged when Hitler agreed to go to war with the U.S. when Japan struck (LaFeber 1998, 208).

Analysis of Third Conflict

Factor	Variable	Present
Demands of State Leader	State Leader Legitimacy	No
	Intensity of Demand for War	Yes
	Institutional Control	Yes
	Support for State Leader	Yes
Alliance Support	Alliance Legitimacy	Yes
	Number of Allies	Yes
	Intensity of Support for War	Yes
	Strength of Ally	Yes
	Identification with Ally	Yes
Total Distance Between States	Tangible Distance	Yes
	Intangible Distance	Yes
Predisposition of the State	Capability	Yes
	Recent Events	Yes
Attractiveness of Target State	Relevance of War Strategies	Yes
	Relevance of Target State	Yes
	Payoff	Yes
Number of factors present	5/5	
Japan's Decision	War	

Demands of State Leaders: Present

Japan's government returned to authoritarianism by 1941 after its short-lived Taisho democracy. Tojo Hideki became Japan's prime minister in October 1941 after the final attempt to find an agreement with the U.S. had failed. His prewar tenure before going to war with the U.S. falls far short of the average 5.66 years that authoritarian leaders are in power (BdM and Siverson 1995), making the variable of legitimacy not present. The intensity of demand for war is present since the Japanese government continued to view the U.S. as a strategic rival (Thompson 2001) and communicated this to Japan in greater urgency. In 1940 Japan's foreign minister, Matsuoka Yasuke, was a "loud voice" that encouraged Japan to fully back the Axis alliance, and leading newspapers, such as *Asahi*, warned that a catastrophe would be inevitable if the U.S. maintained a tough stance towards Japan (LaFeber 1998, 192-4). Institutional control is present and increased with the establishment of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry that brought together state and private industry for the development of military production, and the Japanese military had control over the Cabinet Resources Bureau which had authority over all industrial production in Japan (LaFeber 1998, 162). Support for the state leader is present as public opinion favored nationalistic, aggressive policies, and as seen in a transcript of the Imperial Conference, Japan's leaders agreed to war with the U.S. (Iriye 1999).

Alliance Support: Present

Japan was a member of the Tripartite Pact that was a defensive alliance against the U.S. and had a neutrality treaty with the Soviet Union in 1941 (Gibler 2009). It had multiple allies and an especially strong ally in Germany, who along with other ally members encouraged Japan to strike the U.S. even though the alliance was defensive. Though Japan and its allies lacked cultural affinity they shared similar security interests regarding the U.S.

Total Distance Between States: Present

Japan and the U.S. still had indirect contiguity via the Philippines and Japan had the capability to project its power across the Pacific Ocean to strike the U.S. at Hawaii, which makes the variable of tangible distance present. Intangible distance is still present due to vastly different cultures, societies, and increasing intangible distance from racism that soured relations from 1916-1941.

Predisposition of the State: Present

Japan had the capability to project its power far from home with the world's third largest naval fleet (Stille 2014, 8), but it did not have the capability to fight in the long term: the U.S.'s CINC score was nearly four times larger than Japan's in 1941 (Singer et al 1972). Even though Japan could not fight in the long term it still had the ability to go to war, making the capability variable present. The U.S.'s embargo of oil on Japan was an especially critical issue due to Japan's need for oil to fight its war in China and makes the variable of recent events present.

Attractiveness of Target State: Present

The relevance of strategies available for war is present for several reasons. First, Tojo Hideki reminded the Imperial Conference that Japan's sneak attack on the Russians in 1904 led to a victorious war (Iriye 1999). Second, the U.S.'s resolve to fight a war was questionable as Americans did not want to fight a war and President Roosevelt even declared in 1940 during his reelection campaign that he would not send soldiers to fight in any foreign wars (LaFeber 1998, 194). The U.S.'s resolve was further questionable from Japan's perspective because of how distant the states were from each other. Distance creates uncertainty and a greater likelihood of underestimating an opposing state's resolve and capability with the result that a state fights a war in which they are overmatched for (Markowitz and Fariss 2013). A quick, devastating strike against a state that appeared to have weak resolve to fight a war is a fair strategy, but of course

risky. The variable of relevance of target state is present as the state of Japan still saw the U.S. as a threatening state. Lastly, the variable of payoff is present because of Japan's situation with the U.S. that is parallel to a study on when states decide to fight. In Kadera and Morey's (2008) study they deduced that a state that is economically and militarily weaker than an opposing state has an incentive to engage in military conflict with the stronger opponent as it is the weaker state's only hope to survive. This was Japan's position in 1941 because if it did not go to war it would collapse or if it did go to war it could lose everything later or possibly be victorious (LaFeber 1998, 208).

Japan's Decision: War

All five factors were present when Japan decided to go to war with the U.S. after a series of posturing actions that did not deter either side to back down. A settlement could not be found and though capitulating was a choice—it is always a choice regardless if Japan thought it was not—all five factors were present, and this influenced Japan to choose war instead.

Conclusion

This paper proposed that to solve the war puzzle a picture needed to be found to put all the pieces together into a coherent whole. It was further proposed that the act of killing is the picture for the war puzzle, and when correlating the factors that make killing more likely to studies on what makes war more likely a close parallel is found. A new theory on interstate war initiation, the anatomy of initiation, was created and then applied to a case study of Japan-U.S. relations to see if it explained Japan's decisions when in conflict with the U.S. On the surface the anatomy of initiation theory does seem to work, yet the paper lacks a proper quantitative test to ascertain if the theory works on a wider scale. A quantitative test is certainly possible as many of the

variables already have datasets (i.e. contiguity, capability, rivalry). However, that test was outside the scope of this paper and can be done in future research.

Until then there is promise that the psychology behind the act of killing can provide an answer to the puzzle of war. Killing and going to war are the same actions only at different scales, which is why there are close parallels between what makes a person more likely to kill and what makes a state more likely to go to war. Based upon Grossman's theory on what makes a person more likely to kill, I identified five factors that make states more likely to go to war: the demands of state leader; alliance support; predisposition of the state; total distance between states; and the attractiveness of the target state. The presence of each factor increases the likelihood that a state will go to war but does not guarantee that war will occur when all five factors are present. This is because states are highly resistant to going to war—just like how people are highly resistant to killing—and will choose other courses of action if possible, such as posturing, capitulating, or making a settlement. This does not mean that a state will not go to war if none of the factors are present it is only unlikely that it will.

One avenue of future research is the applicability of the theory to other areas of international conflict such as civil wars. Some studies on civil wars are similar to Grossman's variables of emotional distance (Seymour and Cunningham 2016), relevance of available strategies (Fearon and Laitin 2003), and capability (Buhaug 2006) for example. The names of the factors would have to change (e.g. demands of state leader to demands of ethnic/religious/identity leader) but the theory would work the same and could help to solve that complicated puzzle in IR also.

As a final note, this theory answers the question on whether “human nature [can] explain peace as well as war” since it can “explain the conditions under which each outcome is likely to

occur” (Levy and Thompson 2011, 21). It also puts earlier arguments against human nature as a cause of war into question. To disregard human nature as a cause of war (Waltz 1959) would be denying the fact that humans are the cause of every single war in history. War is a uniquely human affair; therefore, it can only be understood when taking human nature into account. To deny human nature’s role in war would be placing war outside of human choice, making it either a random phenomenon or an inevitable outcome when the stars and planets are aligned, and putting the blame on scapegoats such as states, power transitions, regime types, contiguity etc. for the horrors of war. Because human nature is guilty for every war it should be where any explanation for it begins.

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Appendix

Summary of Grossman's hypotheses on what makes soldiers more likely to kill:

Demands of Authority-

- The closer a leader is to the soldier the more likely the soldier will kill.
- The more respect a soldier has for the leader the more likely he will kill.
- The more intensely the leader demands to kill the more likely the soldier will kill.
- The more legitimate the leader the more likely the soldier will kill.

Group Absolution-

- The more a soldier identifies with the group he will be more likely to kill.
- The closer the soldier is physically to the group he will be more likely to kill.
- The more intensely the group supports killing the soldier will be more likely to kill.
- The more people there are in the group the soldier will be more likely to kill.
- The more legitimate the group is the soldier will be more likely to kill.

Total Distance from the Victim-

- The farther away the victim is physically from the soldier the more likely he will kill.
- The farther away the victim is emotionally from the soldier the more likely he will kill.

Target Attractiveness of Victim-

- The more relevant and effective the strategies a soldier has available to kill the victim will make him more likely to kill.
- The more relevant the victim is as a threat to the soldier the more likely he will kill the victim.
- The more a soldier gains and/or enemy loses from killing the victim the more likely he will kill the victim.

Predisposition of Soldier-

- The better trained a soldier is the more likely it will be that he kills.
- Recent experiences that the soldier has gone through, such as a death of a friend, will make him more likely to kill.
- The natural temperament of the soldier will make him more likely to kill.