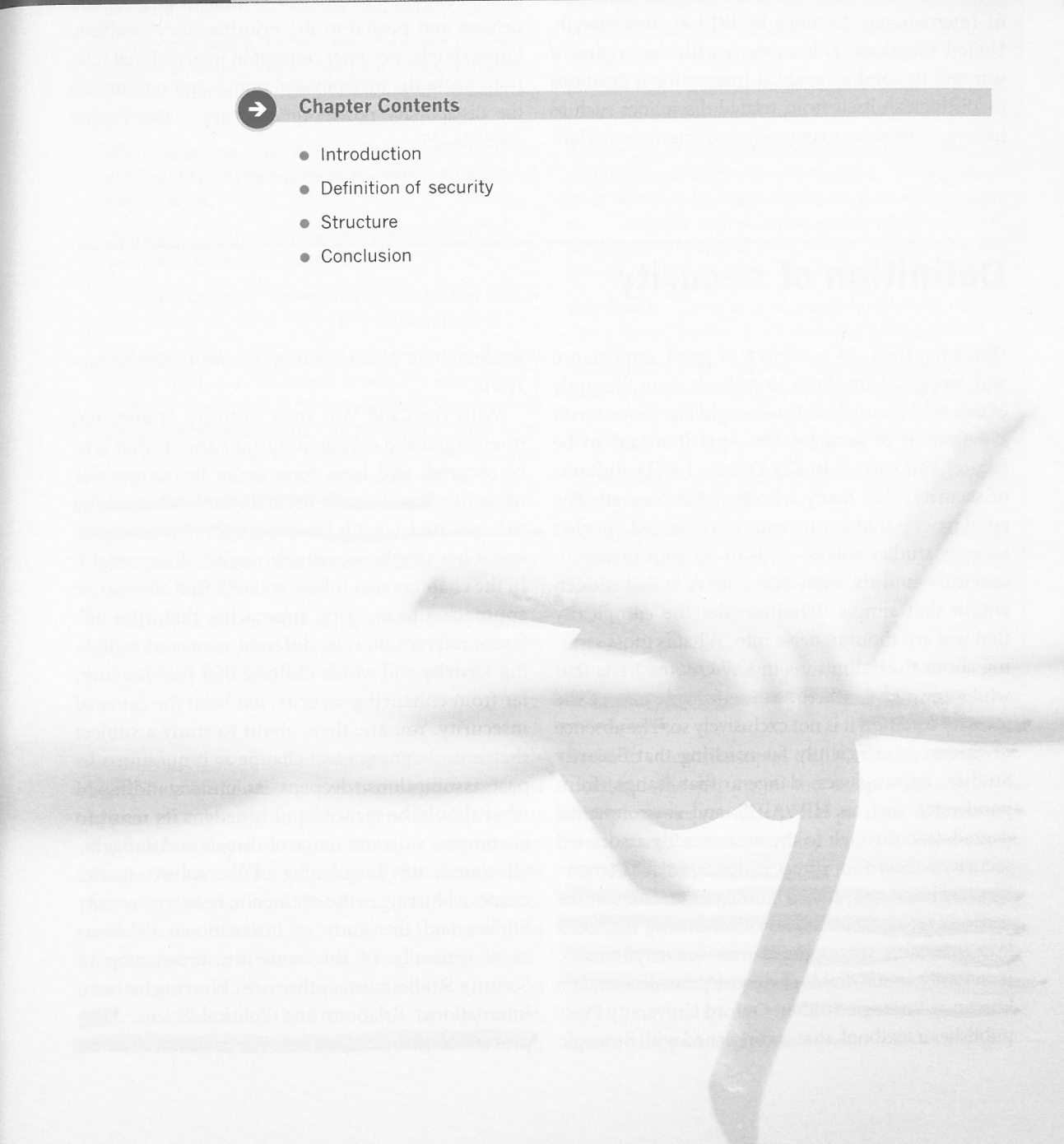# 1 Introduction: What is Security Studies?

ALAN COLLINS

→ **Chapter Contents**

- Introduction
- Definition of security
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Introduction

Welcome to Security Studies: *the* sub-discipline of International Relations. It is the study of security that lies at the heart of International Relations. It was the carnage of the First World War, and the desire to avoid its horrors again, that gave birth to the discipline of International Relations in 1919 at Aberystwyth, United Kingdom. This concern with the origins of war and its conduct enabled International Relations to 'distinguish itself from related disciplines such as history, economics, geography, and international law'

(Sheehan 2005: 1). It is the survival of agents, which for much of the discipline has meant sovereign states, that has become accepted as the dominant explanatory tool for understanding their behaviour. Security is a matter of high politics; central to government debates and pivotal to the priorities they establish. Quite simply, 'no other concept in international relations packs the metaphysical punch, nor commands the disciplinary power of "security" ' (Der Derian 1995: 24–25).

Definition of security

Welcome, then, to a subject of great importance and, since you are about to embark upon the study of this subject, no doubt you would like to start with a definition of security. Or, what it means to be secure? You will see in Key Quotes 1.1 (Definitions of security) that many scholars have done so. The good news is that a consensus has emerged on what security studies entails—it is to do with threats to survival—and the even better news is that hidden within that simple definition lies the complexity that you are about to delve into. What is most striking about the definitions in Key Quotes 1.1 is that while war and the threat to use force is part of the security equation it is not exclusively so. The absence of threats is sufficiently far-reaching that Security Studies encompasses dangers that range from pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS, and environmental degradation through to the more readily associated security concerns of direct violence, such as terrorism and inter-state armed conflict. The latter, which so dominated the discipline that during the Cold War it became synonymous with Security Studies, is actually a sub-field of Security Studies and is known as Strategic Studies. Oxford University Press publishes a textbook that is concerned with Strategic

Studies: it is called *Strategy in the Contemporary World*.

With the Cold War over, Security Studies has re-emerged and core assumptions about what is to be secured, and how, have come to occupy our thoughts. Traditionally the state has been the thing to be secured, what is known as the referent object, and it has sought security through military might. In the chapters that follow you will find alternative approaches to security; approaches that offer different referent objects, different means of achieving security and which indicate that past practice, far from enhancing security, has been the cause of insecurity. You are, then, about to study a subject that is undergoing great change as it questions its past assumptions, deepens its understanding of what should be secured and broadens its remit to encompass a diverse range of threats and dangers. Of course, this broadening of the subject matter creates a blurring in the distinction between Security Studies and the study of International Relations more generally. In this sense the broadening of Security Studies mirrors the wider blurring between International Relations and Political Science. The process of globalization has led to internal issues

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KEY QUOTES 1.1

Definitions of security

'Security itself is a relative freedom from war, coupled with a relatively high expectation that defeat will not be a consequence of any war that should occur.'

Ian Bellamy, 'Towards a theory of international security', *Political Studies*, **29/1 (1981), p. 102.**

'A nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values it if wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war.'

Walter Lippman, cited in Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* **(Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p. 16.**

'National security may be defined as the ability to withstand aggression from abroad.'

Giacomo Luciani, 'The economic content of security', *Journal of Public Policy*, **8/2 (1989), p. 151.**

'A threat to national security is an action or sequence of events that (1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state.'

Richard H. Ullman, 'Redefining security', *International Security*, **8/1 (1983), p. 133.**

'Security, in any objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.'

Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* **(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 150.**

'Security-insecurity is defined in relation to vulnerabilities—*both internal and external*—that threaten or have the potential to bring down or weaken state structures, both territorial and institutional, and governing regimes (emphasis in original).'

Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament* **(Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p. 9.**

'Emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from the physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do . . . Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin. Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security.'

Ken Booth. 'Security and emancipation', *Review of International Studies*, **17/4 (October 1991), p. 319.**

'If people, be they government ministers or private individuals, perceive an issue to threaten their lives in some way and respond politically to this, then that issue should be deemed to be a *security* issue (emphasis in original).'

Peter Hough, *Understanding Global Security* **(London: Routledge, 2004), p. 9.**

'Security . . . implies both coercive means to check an aggressor and all manner of persuasion, bolstered by the prospect of mutually shared benefits, to transform hostility into cooperation.'

Edward A. Kolodziej, *Security and International Relations* **(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 25**

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becoming externalized and external issues internalized. The role of domestic agents and policy concerns appear prominently on global agendas, whether it is the future political structure of Iraq or deforestation in the Amazon. This blurring of the demarcation between International Relations, Political Science and Security Studies can be seen in the breadth of topics covered in this book and the centrality of security in theories of international relations (for more on this see Chapter 21). This is to be welcomed. I know it can appear confusing and it would be much

easier to categorize topics neatly, but this is to misunderstand the nature of the social sciences. These disciplines are sub-disciplines precisely because they overlap and have 'something to say' about the same topics. Instead of looking for different subject matters it is better to think about different approaches. Despite the contested nature of security you know that ultimately we are interested in how referent objects are threatened and what they can do to survive. With that thought in mind, examining this diverse range of topics might seem rather less daunting.

Structure

The book is not designed to be read from start (Chapter 1) to finish (Chapter 21) because this is not the way to read an academic text. If this seems a peculiar thing to write then let me explain. You are not reading a novel in which the aim is to keep you in suspense until the final pages where you discover who committed the crime or whether the lovers live happily ever after. You want to know the questions and the answers as soon as possible and then, because, as important as the answers are, they are not the most important thing, you should want to know why these are the answers and how they were reached. Think of it as a complicated maths question in which the mathematician has scribbled furiously on the blackboard (or more likely whiteboard today) a series of, to a layperson, unintelligible equations that eventually lead to an answer. It is the bit in between the question and the answer (the bit in between are those impenetrable equations) that reveal why the answer was found and found in that particular way. It is like this with your studies too. You should want to know, and your tutor certainly will, why you believe in the answers you have found: to know your thought processes. Knowing why you think about a subject the way that you do, so these thought processes can be convincingly articulated in oral and written form, is what reading for a degree is all about.

Therefore in this book when reading the chapters it is perfectly fine to read the introduction and then the conclusion, but you then have to read the bits in between to know why the answers found in the conclusion were reached. To understand the author's thought processes will help you develop yours. So, having read what this book contains, which you will find in this chapter, then read the conclusion. Chapter 21 will present you with the state of Security Studies, and the theorizing that has taken place in the discipline. It provides you with the context of why we, students and tutors (scholars of the subject), think about the subject the way that we do. In particular the chapter reveals the differences between American and European approaches to theorizing about security as it traces past, present and possible future trends in how security is studied by today's scholars. For those new to Security Studies and/or International Relations it will be a testing read, but stick with it because it will be a chapter that you will want to read more than once as you increase your knowledge of this subject; in each read you will discover something new. Once Chapters 1 and 21 have been read the book becomes a pick 'n' mix, so if you want to start with weapons of mass destruction (Chapter 15) or terrorism (Chapter 16) then go right ahead. That is not to say that the structure has no meaning and I would strongly advise that you at least begin with the approaches section and especially Chapter 2 in order to appreciate the primary role that states and power have had in the study of security. By beginning with the approaches section you will be able to appreciate just how hugely important different approaches are in establishing what constitutes security; a point that will be evident once you read Chapter 21.

The book is divided into three sections: differing approaches to the study of security; the broadening and deepening of security; and finally, a range of traditional and non-traditional issues that have emerged on the security agenda. The authors come from a range of countries and their examples are global in scope. Nevertheless the field of Security Studies, as with International Relations more generally, is dominated by Western thought and approaches. One of the refreshing changes in post-Cold War Security Studies is that the security problems of the developing world are no longer either ignored or seen through the prism of the East–West conflict. We are therefore examining these security problems and, perhaps, in doing so we will witness the emergence of specifically African or Asian approaches to the study of security that will force us to rethink core assumptions and gain a greater understanding of the Security Studies field.

In the meantime the field, while global in scope, remains dominated by Western thought.

Approaches

In the book's first substantive chapter, Chapter 2, Patrick Morgan provides an accessible explanation of why states have been the core concern for Security Studies. In this chapter you are introduced to the two traditionally dominant explanations of why and how states have sought security: Realism and Liberalism. We can think of these as traditional approaches because they underpinned security studies for much of our thinking during the previous century; they remain, though, hugely influential and just because they are labelled traditional does not mean they have been replaced by more recent thinking. New thinking about security has emerged, especially in the post-Cold War period, and such approaches are explained and examined in the other chapters in the Approaches section. You should think of these new approaches as challenging the dominance of the traditional insights offered by Realism and Liberalism. It may be that you find the traditional explanations of how security can be conceived of and achieved convincing; which is fine so long as you reach that conclusion with an understanding of the other approaches. In other words, to find an approach to understanding security convincing, not based on ignorance of other approaches but with a full understanding of them.

An alternative approach and one that also has a long tradition is Peace Studies, although as a formal field of study its origins are found in the post-1945 period. Here the approach to security is distinctively broad based, both in the nature of threats that the field covers and also its approaches to finding solutions. Thus although initially concerned with the arrival of nuclear weapons, peace studies, long before the post-Cold War era, was noting the security implications of environmental degradation and poverty. With a wide agenda it is not perhaps surprising to learn that academics working in Peace Studies come not just from politics and international relations but other disciplines in the Social Sciences, notably anthropologists and sociologists and the Natural Sciences, such as physics and mathematics; it is a truly interdisciplinary field. In Chapter 3 a leading authority, Paul Rogers, provides a historical account of how Peace Studies developed, highlighting its characteristics and revealing its continued relevancy to contemporary security studies.

The next chapter captures the reflections that took place by some scholars studying security in the immediate post-Cold War period. These reflections predate the end of the Cold War but they have flourished since the removal of the nuclear sword of Damocles that hung over the study of security. Labelled Critical Security Studies (CSS), David Mutimer provides an explanation of the different approaches that have developed since CSS first arrived on the scene in 1994. For those new to critical thinking it is a demanding read but thoroughly worthwhile because, amongst many of the things it will give you pause to ponder, it unashamedly forces you to think through your assumptions and it reconnects security with its normative origins.

A criticism aimed not just at security studies but the wider field of international relations is the failure to appreciate the important insights that gender provides. Caroline Kennedy-Pipe reveals two elements that gender can provide in our understanding of security: a practical appreciation of the role women have been ascribed in the security field and a discursive element that reveals the implicit link between militarism and masculinity. The latter highlights how the notions of honour, nobleness and valour are associated with masculinity and war, implicitly therefore leaving femininity devoid of such positive attributes. The former notes how women, if they are mentioned at all, are portrayed in a secondary, supporting role to men, whereas the reality is that in many ways (rape, prostitution, breeders) women are victims and their plight has remained a silence in the study of security.

One of the new 'buzz words' in the security literature is Human Security. It shares much in common with critical approaches to security; the most notable being it is a critique of the state-centrism of the traditional approach. As the name suggests, the referent

for security are humans, but as Pauline Kerr explains in Chapter 6, while this change of referent object reveals the close connection between development and security, it also brings many challenges to maintaining analytical rigour. By dividing human security proponents into narrow and broad schools it is possible for you to appreciate the vast arrays of threats that exist to humans and their livelihoods and thus enables you to make your own judgement about what constitutes security. The chapter also compares the state-centrism of realism with human security to reveal both of their strengths and weaknesses.

The final chapter in the approaches section, Chapter 7, examines a process known as 'securitization' that was introduced to the literature by scholars working at the Conflict and Peace Research Institute (COPRI) in Copenhagen. Known collectively as the Copenhagen School, these scholars place primary importance on determining how an issue becomes a security issue, by how it is articulated. That is, we think of something as a security issue because the elite, such as political leaders, have convinced us that it represents a threat to our very survival. They are therefore interested in the 'speech acts' that the elite use in order to convince an audience that in order to counter a threat they require emergency powers. It is then a subjective approach to determining what constitutes security. A threat exists because an audience has been convinced it exists by the elite and they have granted the elite the authority to use emergency powers to counter the threat. The threat therefore is not something that simply exists; it has to be articulated as a threat for it to become a matter of security. Ralf Emmers explains this process, notes limitations with the concept of securitization and uses case studies ranging from Australian reaction to undocumented migration to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Deepening and broadening

The middle section of the book examines the deepening and broadening that has taken place in Security Studies. As will have become evident from the Approaches section, the theoretical approach you take towards examining security will determine

the type of subject matter that you consider constitutes security. This part of the book contains five sectors of security; these are the recognizable sectors that you will find in the Security Studies literature. The exception is Regime Security, which I have included instead of political security because firstly, political security has a tendency to become a miscellaneous section in which security issues that cannot fit in the other sectors end up, and secondly, while political security is concerned with external threats (concern with recognition) its greater utility lies in internal threats (concern with legitimacy) to the regime. Labelling the chapter Regime therefore clarifies what the referent object is and also highlights the internal dimension of this security sector. Whether these sectors do constitute security is contentious, so, as with all your reading, adopt a critical, enquiring mind, and see if you are persuaded.

We begin with military security because it is the home, or turf as Eric Herring, the author of Chapter 8, writes, of our traditional understanding of what constitutes security. The purpose here is to show that the approach you adopt in studying military security, and here securitization and constructivism are used, determines what constitutes military security. Traditionally, the agenda for military security has been synonymous with strategy as a tool of statecraft and this remains a powerful interpretation of military security today. This, though, is a constructed interpretation of military security, not a natural or innate one. Adopting a constructivist approach allows us to ask questions about what constitutes the threat and how it is perceived. Using a variety of cases, including the Cuban Missile Crisis and Columbia, this chapter reveals (i) the broad agenda of issues to be examined in the military sector and (ii) the narratives, or discourse, which frame our understanding of threats in this sector.

Turning our attention to the security concerns within states enables us to appreciate that life in the developed world is far from indicative of that lived by most of the planet's inhabitants. The majority of people living in the developing world face a vast range of insecurities, from half a million people dying each year from the use of light weapons to

40,000 dying each day from hunger. There is, as Richard Jackson writes in Chapter 9 on regime security, 'a profound disjuncture between the kinds of security enjoyed by a small group of developed nations and the kind of security environment inhabited by the majority of the world's population'. In this chapter you will have the opportunity to understand the underlying causes of the developing world's inherent insecurity and why it is that, far from being the provider of security, governing regimes become the main source of their peoples' insecurity. It is a bleak picture that is portrayed but after reading the chapter you will appreciate the complexities that make bringing security to these millions of people both urgent and yet extremely difficult. The notion of an insecurity dilemma not only captures the spiralling nature of the violence but also how problematic finding a solution is.

The broadening of security so that it means more than a preoccupation with the state and military defence should by now have become appreciated. In Chapter 10 on societal security an alternative to the state, and indeed the individual, is posited. In this instance you will be introduced to the notion of a collective of people becoming the thing to be secured. In recent times the term 'ethnic' has become a popular label for describing conflict between groups within states. In this chapter Paul Roe introduces you to a means of examining the dynamics behind those ethnic conflicts where identity lies at the conflict's core. Importantly he does so by focusing on non-military issues that can give rise to insecurity and thereby shows how ambiguity in such seemingly non-threatening issues, such as education, can indeed become matters of great concern. If you have an interest in the nexus between security and identity, this is a must-read chapter.

Although it predates the end of the Cold War it was in the 1990s, and especially concern over ozone depletion and global warming, that environmental change began to be thought of as a "new" security threat. In Chapter 11, while you will be exposed to the vast array of environmental degradation that is occurring in today's world, the question of interest is what makes environmental change a matter of

security? Jon Barnett provides an explanation of why the environment emerged on the security agenda before providing six interpretations of environmental security. You will therefore have the opportunity to consider whether the environment really is a security issue and whether labelling it as a matter of security helps or hinders attempts to reverse environmental degradation. For those with a normative interest in studying international security, this is an important chapter to read.

The final chapter of the deepening and broadening part of the book, Chapter 12, looks at a sector that will seem less problematic in terms of its connection to security; the economy. A state's economy and its access to resources are essential components in determining a state's ability to protect itself in an anarchical self-help environment. This, though, is only part of the equation and actually tells us little of what economic security is. In this chapter Christopher Dent uses the term economic-security nexus to describe the above and thereby distinguish it from economic security. The chapter will use a specific definition of economic security to highlight that what is being secured is not just the economy but also its ability to provide prosperity in the future. In this sense economic security concerns promoting activities that enhance a state's, or region's, economic growth. You will be introduced to eight types, or typologies, of economic security, including accessing markets and finance; transborder economic cooperation; the ideologies that underpin economic activity. In so doing you will be able to note the role institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation play as well as appreciate the economic security issues raised by such crises as the East Asian Financial crisis of 1997–98.

Traditional and non-traditional

The final section of the book highlights a series of traditional and non-traditional security issues that have emerged on the Security Studies agenda. The section begins with traditional security concerns and then moves to the non-traditional issues that

have emerged as the subject area has expanded. We begin by addressing the traditional security concern of the threat and use of force. This is examined by looking at how Western strategy has evolved post-Cold War away from deterrence to compellence and in particular the use of coercive diplomacy. This captures the logic behind Western, and in particular US, strategic thinking.

The Bush administration's willingness to talk of 'pre-emptive' use of force, and indeed to implement it, has revealed a significant change in strategic thinking in the West. It is no longer simply enough to deter an opponent from taking action, it is now necessary to persuade, coerce and, on occasion, force them to change their behaviour. This, as Peter Viggo Jakobsen writes, has led to the post-Cold War era witnessing the pursuit of coercive diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy is the threat, and if necessary the limited use of force, designed to make an opponent comply with the coercer's wishes. It is action short of brutal force and thus an attempt to achieve a political objective as cheaply as possible. It has been used to respond to acts of aggression, halt WMD programmes and stop terrorism. Chapter 13 provides you with the criteria for what constitutes coercive diplomacy and the obstacles to its success, and concludes that Western efforts have largely failed. If you want to understand the strategy that underpins Western, and specially US, policy on the use of force since the end of the Cold War, this is a chapter for you.

The role of intelligence in determining security concerns and outcomes has never been more prominent than in today's security environment. Chapter 14 explains the different types of intelligence agencies that exist and how they collect information. Stan Taylor explains the intelligence cycle so that you can appreciate what a lengthy process it is, and more importantly how errors can occur. Covert action is examined and, with reference to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, intelligence failure, or what might more properly be called policy failure, is examined. This chapter ties in closely with coercive diplomacy since the threat to use force in order to successfully compel an opponent requires knowledge about their goals. In a

world of pre-emption good intelligence is a necessary condition for success.

Since the tragic events of 9/11 the acronym WMD has been catapulted into everyday usage. Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the fear that rogue states or terrorists will target the USA or Europe with such weapons, has become a central concern for Western states. The belief that Iraq had an undisclosed arsenal of WMD provided the justification for the USA's decision to remove Saddam Hussein's regime, and it is the nuclear programmes of both North Korea and Iran (the former a declared weapons programme; the latter a potential and feared possibility) that earned them membership of Bush's 'Axis of Evil'. What, though, are WMD, why are they considered so different from conventional weapons, how easy are they to use and what has been their impact on international relations? These are the questions that James Wirtz addresses in Chapter 15.

Terrorism, perhaps even more so than WMD, has come to occupy a top spot on the security agendas of states. In Chapter 16 Brenda and Jim Lutz provide a definition of terrorism and explain the various types (religious, ethnic, ideological) and causes of terrorism. Using a typology that sees terrorism as either a form of war, or crime, or disease, they are able to explain why certain countermeasures are adopted by states and their implications for civil liberties. The chapter will provide you with details of terrorists ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to Al-Qaeda and reveal the incidence of terrorism that has occurred throughout the world in recent times.

Chapter 17 examines the last of the traditional security issues in this book: the arms trade, or what Joanna Spear and Neil Cooper call the defence trade. In this chapter they examine the reasons why states procure weapon systems, ranging from the action-reaction model to technological determinism, before providing details of trends in defence expenditure, the state of the market and the different types of goods and services that constitute today's defence trade.

AIDS is a pandemic; it is estimated that 40 million people are living with HIV and on average almost three times as many people die from

AIDS-related illnesses *every day*, than died during the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. In Chapter 18 Stefan Elbe introduces you to an illness that may well claim more victims than the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918–19, which is estimated to have killed between 25 and 40 million people and in all likelihood will exceed the numbers killed by the bubonic plague, estimated to have killed 137 million in three major epidemics in the 6th, 14th, and 17th centuries. Examining human, national and international security, this chapter shows how AIDS/HIV can be thought of as a security issue, including how peacekeeping operations can be responsible for spreading AIDS/HIV. While it is clearly an exacerbating factor for national security it is in itself a direct threat when individuals are the referent object.

In 1999 Thailand identified the narcotics trade as the country's number one threat to national security. Drug-trafficking, along with, among others, human-trafficking and money laundering across national frontiers, are all forms of transnational crime and as the Thai experience reveals, this non-traditional security issue has risen rapidly up the national security agendas of states in the post-Cold War era. In Chapter 19 Jeanne Giraldo and Harold Trinkunas reveal the multiple ways in which transnational crime impacts directly, and indirectly, on human and national security. They explain why it has become more prevalent since the 1990s, the links between organized crime and terrorism, and the various responses that states have taken to curb its operation. If you want to appreciate a 'dark side' of globalization and how transnational criminal activity has impacted on international security, this is a must-read chapter.

The examination of what non-traditional issues constitute security studies today concludes by examining the role of children in war. Children have increasingly become important actors in our understanding of combat, whether that be their role in guerrilla warfare or the legal implications child soldiers create for humanitarian intervention, and they have become more important to our thinking more generally about security in pre- and post-conflict torn societies. They are an undertheorized and underutilized political agent and in this chapter Helen Brocklehurst brings to the fore their role and the implications this has for our thinking about war and security.

Conclusion

You are, as I am sure you appreciate having read the above, about to embark upon a whirlwind tour of a fascinating subject: a subject that has undergone, and continues to undergo, a thorough introspection of its core assumptions. It is a wonderful time to be a scholar of the discipline—and by scholar I mean students and tutors—because there is so much new and innovative thinking taking place that it is impossible for it not to open your mind. Listen to the ideas contained in the chapters that follow and if, by the end of it, you are more confused than you are now, then it has been a worthwhile enterprise. A caveat should, though, be added: that your confusion is a reflection not of ignorance but an appreciation of how complicating and complex the subject is and how challenging it is to therefore be a scholar of security studies. The chapter began with the question: What is Security Studies? It is all the above and more. Happy reading.

Visit the Online Resource Centre that accompanies this book for lots of interesting additional material: www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/collins/

IMPORTANT WEBSITES

● The Human Security Report at **www.humansecurityreport.info** will be produced annually by the Human Security Centre at the Liu Institute for Global Issues at the University of British Columbia and Oxford University Press. It is an invaluable source.

● Human Security News, is an excellent daily report at **www.hsc.list@ubc.ca** also produced by the Human Security Centre.

● Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) **http:// www.cidcm. umd.edu/** CIDCM regularly publishes a very good source, *Peace and Conflict*, which canvasses the interplay between conflict and development.

● International Crisis Group (ICG) at **http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=3624** regularly publishes *Crisis Watch*, a report on crises around the world.

Visit the Online Resource Centre that accompanies this book for lots of interesting additional material: www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/collins/

7 Securitization

RALF EMMERS

Chapter Contents

● Introduction
● Securitization model
● Limitations of the securitization model
● Cases of securitization
● Conclusion

Reader's Guide

The chapter introduces, assesses, and applies the Copenhagen School and its securitization model. The School widens the definition of security by encompassing five different sectors—military, political, societal, economic and environmental security. It examines how a specific matter becomes securitized, that is, its removal from the political process to the security agenda. The chapter analyses the act of securitization by identifying the role of the securitizing actor and the importance of the 'speech act' in convincing a specific audience of the existential nature of a threat. It argues that the Copenhagen School allows for non-military matters to be included in security studies while still offering a coherent understanding of the concept of security. Yet the chapter also stresses the dangers and the negative connotations of securitizing an issue as well as some shortcomings of the model. While the chapter is conceptually driven, it relies on a series of illustrations to apply the securitization model. These include the securitization of undocumented migration under the John Howard government in Australia, the securitization of the illicit trafficking and abuse of drugs in the United States and Thailand as well as the failure by US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to persuade world opinion of the existential threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq.