

International Politics

POLS 240 Section 4

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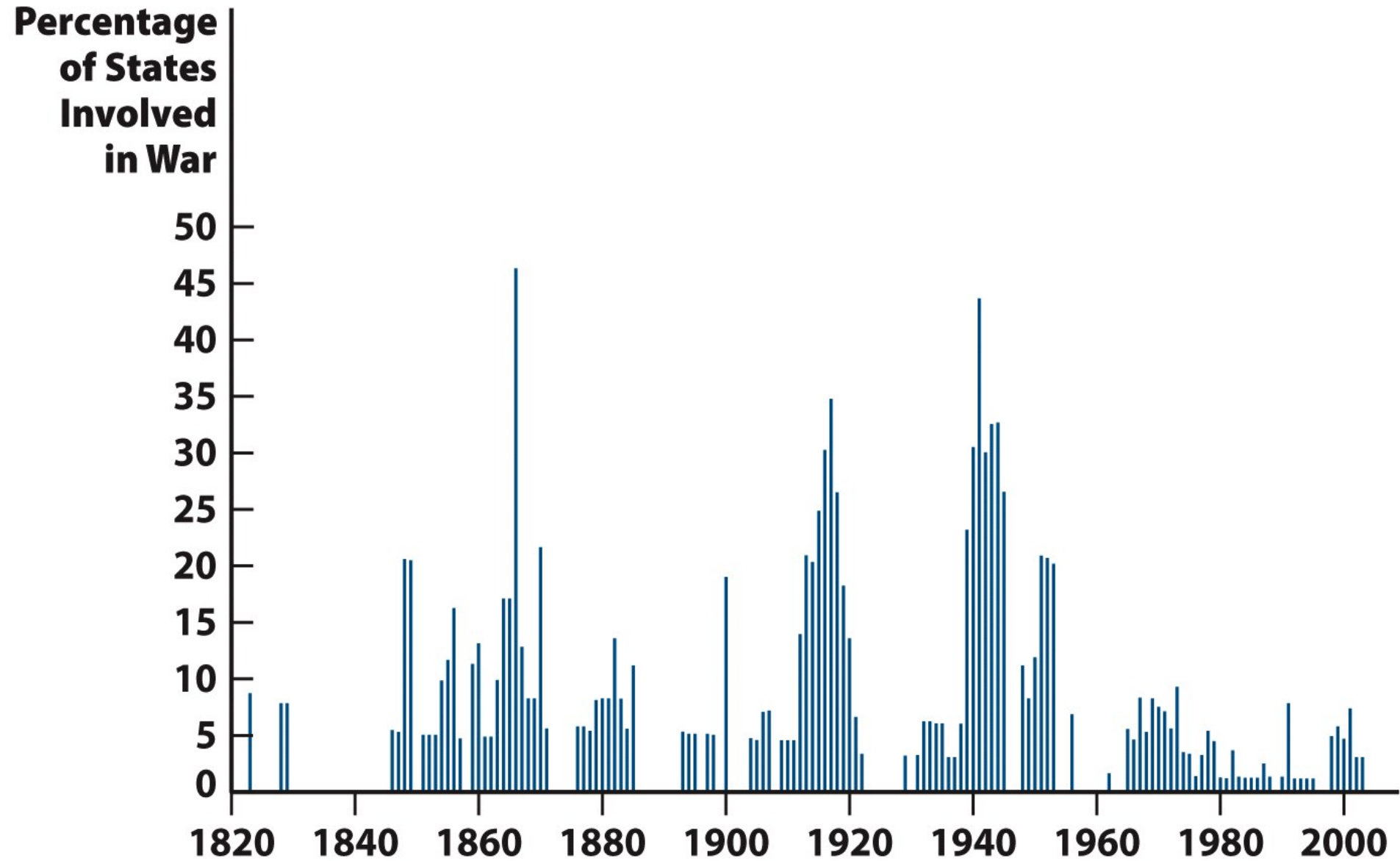
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What Is the Purpose of War?

- **War:** an event involving the organized use of military force by at least two parties that satisfies some minimum threshold of severity.
- **War is not:**
 - Spontaneous, disorganized violence
 - Mass killings against a nonviolent group
 - Case of brief or minor clashes

Interstate Wars (1820-2001)



War is the Exception, Not the Rule

- Percentage of states involved in war is low.
- To explain war we need to ask, “What are they fighting over?” and “Why are they fighting?”
 - Must understand interests and how conflicts are resolved

What Do States Fight Over?

- Territory is the most common reason for fighting because of...
 - Contributing to the wealth of the state through industrial or agricultural resources
 - Having military or strategic value
 - Being valuable for ethnic, cultural or historical reasons

What Do States Fight Over?

- A conflict can arise when a state enacts a policy that benefits itself but harms the interests of another.
- War may be a mechanism for compelling policy change.
 - For example: replacing an offending regime with a friendlier one

What Do States Fight Over?

- Conflicts over regime type or the composition of another's government.
- Conflicts may spring from concerns about relative power.

Which of the following is the most common reason a state would go to war?

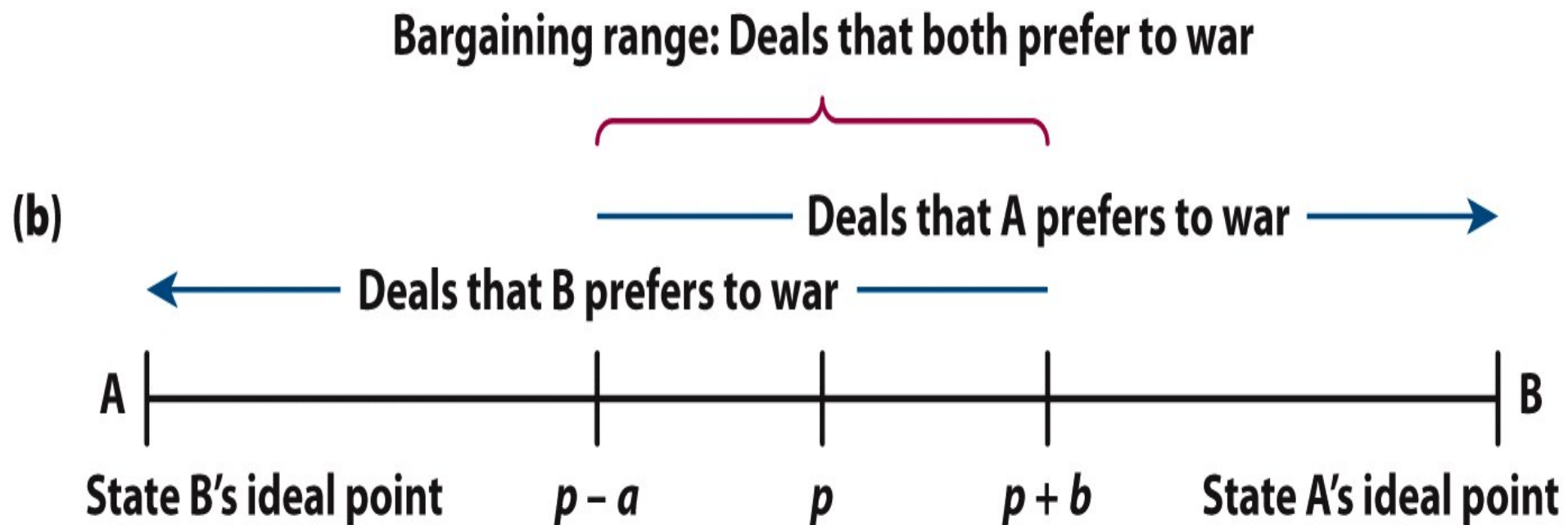
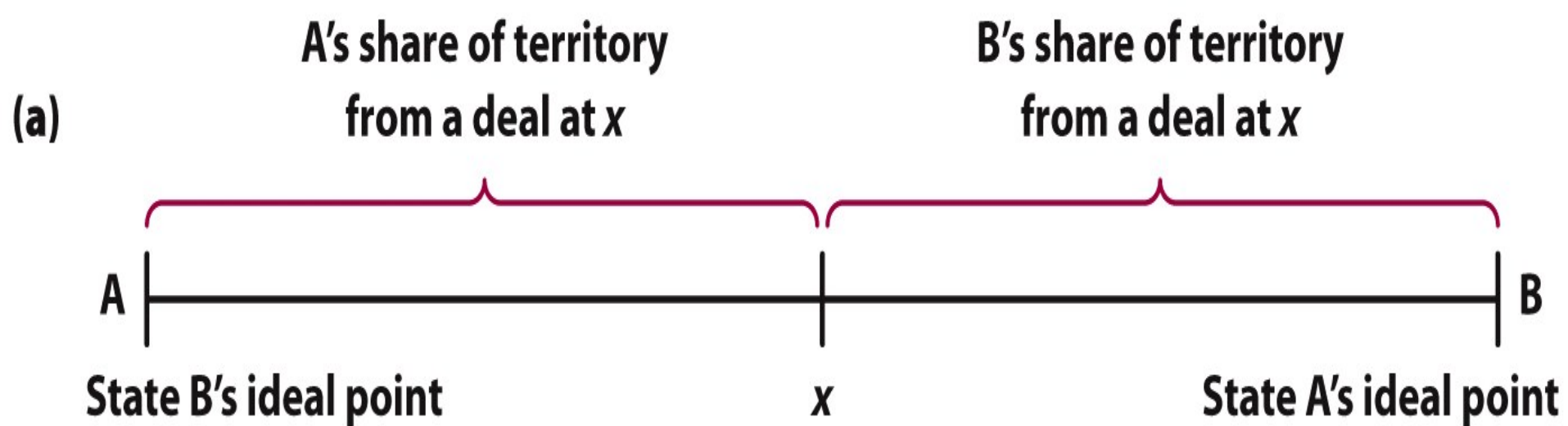
1. Two states claim the same territory.
2. A state resents another state's high tariffs on its imports.
3. A state wants a neighboring state to change into a democratic government.

Core of the Analysis

- War occurs when the bargaining parties fail to reach an agreement.
- Bargaining can fail when:
 - There is incomplete information
 - Commitment to terms of deal is questionable
 - Disputed good is hard to divide

Bargaining and War

- Bargaining under the threat of war is known as **crisis bargaining** or **coercive diplomacy**.
 - “Satisfy my demands or else”
- Likely outcomes and costs of war define the range of acceptable outcomes from crisis bargaining.



Results of the Analysis

- Promoting peaceful conflict resolution requires efforts to:
 - Increase costs of conflict
 - Promote transparency and communication
 - Bring in third parties to enforce commitments
 - Find creative ways of sharing seemingly indivisible goods

Compellence

- An effort to change the status quo through the threat of force is known as **compellence**.
 - A compellent threat is used to coerce the target state into making a concession or changing policy
- “Give me Y or else,” “Stop doing X, or else”

Deterrence

- **Deterrence:** used to preserve the status quo by threatening the other side with unacceptable costs if it seeks to alter the current relationship.
 - “Don’t do X, or else,” “Don’t attack me, or I’ll fight back”
- **Extended deterrence** is an attempt to extend protection to another state.

Compellence and Deterrence

- The most effective threats never need to be carried out.
- War begins when threats fail to generate an outcome that both sides prefer to fighting.

Why would a state agree to a dispute settlement it did not like?

1. It wants to win sympathy from other states.
2. The cost of going to war over the dispute would be more costly than accepting the settlement.
3. It lost its case in the World Court and had to comply with the decision.