

## Postmodern War

1) Group of theorists talking about “postmodern war” or something like it include:

Chris Gray

Jean Baudrillard

Paul Virilio

Michael Ignatieff

Term means different things to different people, but these seems to be important qualities:

Lack of distinction between military and civilians

Importance of information as sinew of war

Media saturation – war as spectacle

Confusion of the real and the virtual

Sense of absurdity

Originated somewhere between WWII and Vietnam

2) Postmodern War partly created by new technologies (The “Revolution in Military Affairs”):

Cruise missiles

JDAMs

Satellites

GPS and laser-guided weapons

Drones

Mobility now key

Rear-front distinction increasingly dissolves

3) Casualties

**Ignatieff** argues U.S. is increasingly intolerant of casualties among own troops

Saw this in way Kosovo war fought

Does this signal lack of resolve to enemies?

Does it impose unethical warfighting where enemy casualties maximized to minimize US casualties?

Airpower over ground troops

Use of local surrogates over US troops

Or is (as **Sapolsky** worries) US becoming nervous of enemy casualties too?

Edward **Luttwak** suggests foreign mercenaries in US military

In Iraq, use of contractors = variant on this theme

Should we reintroduce draft for democracy's sake, as **Rangel** argues?