



A WORLD WITHOUT NUKES: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PERSPECTIVES

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What if nuclear weapons had been neither invented nor discovered? This is the question I take into consideration in this paper. This interesting scenario begs the answer parroted by bloggers and students of politics alike—without nuclear weapons, there would be nothing to stop belligerents from invading, attacking, and otherwise infringing upon the sovereignty of other states. This simplistic answer needs further examination. In this paper, I first consider the place of nuclear weapons in history and their role in the world today. I also analyze many events that are colored by the very existence of nuclear weapons, from the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima to the United States' campaign in Iraq. I look at the decision-making processes by world leaders, and the character of the leaders themselves. I consider the counterfactual scenario from the perspective of several international relations lenses: liberal institutionalism, neorealism, and feminism. After a thorough analysis of these differing viewpoints, I conclude that the feminist perspective is most persuasive.

