

The Politics of Conflict and Violence

Course Director: Scott Williamson

Violence is central to politics, both within and between countries. This course will familiarize PhD students with literatures on domestic and international conflict while preparing them to publish original research on a topic of their choice.

Structure

The course will begin by studying war, including why wars start, how political factors shape combat, when civilians are more likely to be targeted with violence, and how wars end. We will then shift to studying other types of conflict, including violence against refugees, terrorism, state repression, and ethnic violence. The course will conclude by exploring why people may support political violence as well as the contexts in which promoting human rights is more likely to be effective. I will start each lesson with a brief lecture providing background information and outlining the literature. We will then discuss several readings related to the topic. Students should expect to lead discussion in one lecture.

Readings

- Lesson 1: Causes of War
 - Robert Jervis. 1988. War and Misperception. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (4): 675-700.
 - Jack Snyder. 1991. *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*. Cornell University Press.
 - James D. Fearon. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (3): 379-414.
 - David A. Lake. 2010/2011. "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War." *Security Studies* 35 (3): 7-52.

- Lesson 2: Regime Type and War Initiation
 - Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation for the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 93: 791-807.
 - Joanne Gowa. 2000. *Ballots and Bullets: The Elusive Democratic Peace*. Princeton University Press.
 - Jessica L. Weeks. 2012. "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 106 (2): 326-347.
 - Mark S. Bell and Kai Quek. 2028. "Authoritarian Public Opinion and the Democratic Peace." *International Organization* 72 (1): 227-242.

- Lesson 3: Fighting Wars
 - Hein Goemans. 2000. "Fighting for Survival: The Fate of Leaders and the Duration of War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44: 555-579.

- Dan Reiter and Allan Stam. 2002. *Democracies at War*. Princeton University Press.
- Eric Min. 2020. "Talking While Fighting: Understanding the Role of Wartime Negotiation." *International Organization* 74 (3): 610-632.
- Jason Lyall. 2020. *Divided Armies: Inequality and Battlefield Performance in Modern War*. Princeton University Press.
- Lesson 4: Civil Wars
 - James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75-90.
 - Stathis N. Kalyvas and Laia Balcells. 2010. "International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 104 (3): 415-429.
 - Idean Salehyan, Kristian Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham. 2011. "Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups," *International Organization* 65: 709-44.
 - Fotini Christia. 2012. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lesson 5: Violence Against Civilians in War
 - Stathis N. Kalyvas. 1999. "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria." *Rationality and Society* 11 (3): 243-285.
 - Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman. 2007. "One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data." *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (2): 233-246.
 - Jessica A. Stanton. 2016. *Violence and Restraint in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press.
 - Laia Balcells and Jessica A. Stanton. 2021. "Violence Against Civilians During Armed Conflict: Moving Beyond the Macro- and Micro-Level Divide." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24: 45-69.
- Lesson 6: How Wars End
 - Barbara F. Walter. 2002. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton University Press.
 - Virginia Page Fortna. 2004. *Peace Time: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace*. Princeton University Press.
 - Elizabeth A. Stanley and John P. Sawyer. 2009. "The Equifinality of War Termination: Multiple Paths to Ending War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53: 651-676.
 - Barbara F. Walter, Lise Morje Howard, and V. Page Fortna. 2020. "The Extraordinary Relationship between Peacekeeping and Peace." *British Journal of Political Science* 51 (4): 1705-1722.
- Lesson 7: Migration and Conflict
 - Idean Salehyan and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2006. "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War." *International Organization* 60 (2): 335-366.

- Kerstin Fisk. 2018. "One-sided Violence in Refugee-hosting Areas." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62 (3): 529-556.
- Kristin Fabbe, Chad Hazlett, and Tolga Sinmazdemir. 2019. "A persuasive peace: Syrian refugees' attitudes toward compromise and civil war termination." *Journal of Peace Research* 56 (1): 103-117.
- Yang-Yang Zhou and Andrew Shaver. 2021. "Reexamining the Effect of Refugees on Civil Conflict: A Global Subnational Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 115 (4): 1175-1196.
- Lesson 8: Terrorism
 - Robert A. Pape. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 97: 343-361.
 - Alan Krueger and Jitka Maleckova. 2003. "Education, Poverty, and Terrorism: Is there a Causal Connection?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17: 119-144.
 - Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter. 2006. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31 (1): 49-80.
 - Erica Chenoweth. 2013. "Terrorism and Democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 355-378.
- Lesson 9: State-Sponsored Violence
 - Benjamin Valentino. 2004. *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century*. Cornell University Press.
 - Christian Davenport. 2007. "State Repression and Political Order." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 1-23.
 - Lisa Blaydes. 2018. *State of Repression: Iraq under Saddam Hussein*. Princeton University Press.
 - Anita R. Gohdes. 2020. "Repression Technology: Internet Accessibility and State Violence." *American Journal of Political Science* 64 (3): 488-503.
- Lesson 10: Electoral and Ethnic Violence
 - Donald L. Horowitz. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press.
 - Steven Wilkinson. 2006. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India*. Cambridge University Press.
 - Sarah Birch, Ursula Daxecker, and Kristine Hoglund. 2020. "Electoral Violence: An Introduction." *Journal of Peace Research* 57 (1): 3-14.
 - Jhacova Williams. 2022. Historical Lynchings and the Contemporary Voting Behavior of Blacks. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*.
- Lesson 11: Popular Support for Violence
 - Martha Finnemore. 2003. *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*. Cornell University Press.
 - Devorah Manekin and Tamar Mitts. 2021. "Effective for Whom? Ethnic Identity and Nonviolent Resistance." *American Political Science Review*.

- Nathan P. Kalmoe and Lilliana Mason. 2022. *Radical American Partisanship: Mapping Violent Hostility, Its Causes, and the Consequences for Democracy*. University of Chicago Press.
- Sean J. Westwood, Justin Grimmer, Matthew Tyler, and Clayton Nall. 2022. “Current research overstates American support for political violence. *PNAS* 119 (12).
- Lesson 12: Promoting Human Rights
 - Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink. 1999. “The socialization of international human rights norms into domestic practices: introduction.” In *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*. Eds. Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink.
 - Emilie M. Hafner-Burton. 2008. “Sticks and Stones: Naming and Shaming the Human Rights Enforcement Problem.” *International Organization* 62 (4): 689-716.
 - Emilie M. Hafner-Burton. 2014. “A social science of human rights.” *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (2): 273-286.
 - Christopher J. Fariss. 2019. “Yes, Human Rights Practices Are Improving Over Time.” *American Political Science Review* 113 (3): 868-881.

Assignments

Participation: Students are expected to read carefully before each lesson and to contribute actively to discussion. They will also lead one discussion during the course.

Research Note: Students will write a 10-page (double-spaced) paper following the formatting guidelines for short papers in the Journal of Politics. The paper should address a topic related to conflict and violence, loosely defined. The purpose of the exercise is to provide students with an opportunity to start a bigger research project or pursue publication of a short article. Statistical analysis of quantitative data will be encouraged but not mandatory. Note that off-the-shelf datasets are widely available for international relations scholarship.