**PSCI 8370: Intrastate Conflict & Terrorism**

Department of Political Science

Vanderbilt University

Spring 2020

Wed 9:10AM-11:40AM

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| Prof. Peter Schram |  |
| peter.schram@vanderbilt.edu |  |
| Office: Commons 328 |  |
| OHs: By Appointment |  |
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**Course Description**

This class examines terror and insurgency through a scientific lens. This class discusses relevant political science works examining (a) why does political violence occur, (b) who participates in political violence, (c) how do terror and insurgent groups organize and operate, (d) best practices for counterinsurgency, and an assortment of other topics. To reflect recent trends in political science, the class will be fairly quantitative. In the class, you will develop the skills to read and critically assess contemporary political science research and to conduct data exploration of your own.

**Grading Breakdown**

*Class Participation (35%):* You will be expected to attend and actively participate in seminar.

*Problem Sets (20%):* You will complete problem sets that are designed to challenge your understanding of the readings and the materials discussed in class. These will involve working with data in any statistical program of your choice and ArcGIS

*Take-the-rudder (10%):* Once you will take the lead on the class. This will involve preparing a short presentation (10-15 minutes) on some subset of the readings, and preparing some seminar-style questions about the readings that you will pose to the class. More guidance will be provided.

*Final Project (35%):*You will write a paper. The paper must have some relation to some aspect of political violence. Your paper can take one of two forms:

1. Open ended research: this will be a standard research paper (~20 pages) that includes (a) some game theory model, (b) some data analysis, or (c) both. This may seem daunting, especially for those of you with limited quantitative background: don’t worry too much about this now. For those who are interested, I will provide suggested projects and data that can be used to complete the projects.
2. (Talk to me first if you want to do this) Grant proposal: you will write a grant proposal for a project you would like to see implemented. You will write this with a specific grant-providing institution in mind.

**Course Policies[[1]](#footnote-1)**

*Academic Honesty.*

This course will follow Vanderbilt’s high standards of academic honesty, available in detail in the University’s Student Handbook.

*Students with Disabilities.*

If you need course accommodations due to a disability, please make an appointment with Prof. Schram. We will work together along with the University’s EAD Department to meet your needs.

*Sensitive Nature of the Class*

This class will discuss disturbing political phenomena. Outside of lecture, you will be exploring datasets describing violent incidents. If participating in this class is causing you distress, set up an appointment with Prof. Schram to find alternate assignments.

**Readings and Schedule**

*Reading and Materials.*

Readings will be assigned from the following books:

Berman, Eli. *Radical, religious, and violent: The new economics of terrorism*. MIT press, 2011.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. *The logic of violence in civil war*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Shapiro, Jacob N. *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing violent covert organizations*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

**Week 1: Intro/QGIS Day**

On the philosophy of science: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztmvtKLuR7I>

On randomized controlled trials: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wy7qpJeozec&t=1s>

Mostly Harmless Econometrics, Ch1-2

Fearon, James D. "Counterfactuals and hypothesis testing in political science." *World politics* 43.2 (1991): 169-195.

Schram “How to Read” Memo

**Week 2: Causes of War (1/31)**

If you have not read Fearon’s “Rationalist explanations for war” (1995) and Powell’s “War as a commitment problem” (2003), please do so. If you have or have not read them, please refer to the “fearon powell substitute” files within the Course Box folder. Work through the “questions” before this class and send these to me.

Walter, Barbara F. "Bargaining failures and civil war." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 243-261.

Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American political science review* 97.1 (2003): 75-90.

Besley, Timothy, and Torsten Persson. 2011. "The logic of political violence." *The quarterly journal of economics* 126.3 (2011): 1411-1445.

Kalyvas pp1-85

**Week 3: Who Fights? (2/7)**

[skim this] Krueger, Alan B., and Jitka Malečková. "Education, poverty and terrorism: Is there a causal connection?." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17.4 (2003): 119-144.

De Mesquita, Ethan Bueno. "The quality of terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 49.3 (2005): 515-530.

Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. "Who fights? The determinants of participation in civil war." *American Journal of Political Science* 52.2 (2008): 436-455.

Dal Bó, Ernesto, and Pedro Dal Bó. "Workers, warriors, and criminals: social conflict in general equilibrium." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 9.4 (2011): 646-677.

Jha, Saumitra, and Steven Wilkinson. "Does combat experience foster organizational skill? Evidence from ethnic cleansing during the partition of South Asia." *American Political Science Review* 106.4 (2012): 883-907.

Berman pp. 1-127.

**Week 4: Who Supports? (1/2: Violence and attitudes) (2/14)**

Blair, Graeme, et al. "Poverty and support for militant politics: Evidence from Pakistan." *American Journal of Political Science* 57.1 (2013): 30-48.

Lyall, Jason. "Does indiscriminate violence incite insurgent attacks? Evidence from Chechnya." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (2009): 331-362.

Condra, Luke N., and Jacob N. Shapiro. "Who takes the blame? The strategic effects of collateral damage." *American Journal of Political Science* 56.1 (2012): 167-187.

Lyall, Jason. "Civilian casualties, humanitarian aid, and insurgent violence in civil wars." *International Organization* 73, no. 4 (2019): 901-926.

Getmansky, Anna, and Thomas Zeitzoff. "Terrorism and voting: The effect of rocket threat on voting in Israeli elections." *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 3 (2014): 588-604.

[Read this to get the theory – don’t worry much about cases] Kalyvas 87-208

**Week 5: Who Supports? (2/2 Identity and attitudes) (2/21)**

Yanagizawa-Drott, David. "Propaganda and conflict: Evidence from the Rwandan genocide." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129.4 (2014): 1947-1994.

Voigtländer, Nico, and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112.26 (2015): 7931-7936.

Dippel, Christian, and Stephan Heblich. "Leadership in Social Movements: Evidence from the" Forty-Eighters" in the Civil War." *American Economic Review* 111, no. 2 (2021): 472-505.

Jha, Saumitra. "Trade, institutions, and ethnic tolerance: Evidence from South Asia." *American political Science review*107.4 (2013): 806-832.

**Week 6: Organizing Terror (2/28)**

Bendor, Jonathan, Amihai Glazer, and Thomas Hammond. "Theories of delegation." *Annual review of political science* 4.1 (2001): 235-269.

Shapiro 1-167.

Gates, Scott. "Recruitment and allegiance: The microfoundations of rebellion." *Journal of Conflict resolution* 46.1 (2002): 111-130.

Schram, Self-Managing Terror

Shapiro, Jacob N., and David A. Siegel. "Coordination and security: How mobile communications affect insurgency." *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 3 (2015): 312-322.

**Week 7: Development and COIN (3/14)**

Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian, “US Food Aid and Civil Conflict.” American Economic Review vol. 104, no. 6 (2014): 1630–1666.

Berman, Eli, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter. "Can hearts and minds be bought? The economics of counterinsurgency in Iraq." *Journal of Political Economy* 119.4 (2011): 766-819.

Dell, Melissa, and Pablo Querubin. "Bombing the Way to State-Building? Lessons from the Vietnam War." (2016).

Shapiro, Jacob N., and Nils B. Weidmann. "Is the phone mightier than the sword? Cellphones and insurgent violence in Iraq." *International Organization* 69, no. 2 (2015): 247-274.

**Week 8: Kinetic Tactics and COIN (3/21)**

Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor. 2015. “Counter-Suicide-Terrorism: Evidence from House Demolitions.” Journal of Politics 77(1):27-43.

Johnston, Patrick B. "Does decapitation work? Assessing the effectiveness of leadership targeting in counterinsurgency campaigns." *International Security*36.4 (2012): 47-79.

Calderón, Gabriela, et al. "The beheading of criminal organizations and the dynamics of violence in Mexico." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59.8 (2015): 1455-1485.

Schram “Managing Insurgency”

Max Abrahms and Philip B.K. Potter. 2015. “Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics,” International Organization 69 (2): 311-342.

**Week 9: The International Community (3/28)**

Fortna, Virginia Page. "Does peacekeeping keep peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war." *International studies quarterly* 48.2 (2004): 269-292.

Salehyan, Idean, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. "Refugees and the spread of civil war." *International Organization* 60.2 (2006): 335-366.

Dube, Arindrajit, Oeindrila Dube, and Omar García-Ponce. "Cross-border spillover: US gun laws and violence in Mexico." *American Political Science Review* 107.3 (2013): 397-417.

Dube, Oeindrila, and Juan F. Vargas. "Commodity price shocks and civil conflict: Evidence from Colombia." *The Review of Economic Studies* 80.4 (2013): 1384-1421.

**Week 10: Proxy Wars (4/4)**

Schultz, Kenneth A. "The enforcement problem in coercive bargaining: Interstate conflict over rebel support in civil wars." *International Organization* 64.2 (2010): 281-312.

Schram, Peter. "Hassling: how states prevent a preventive war." *American journal of political science* 65, no. 2 (2021): 294-308.

Berman & Lake, Proxy Wars: Introduction, Colombia, Lebanon and Gaza, Pakistan, & Iraq cases.

“Security transitions” (found here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/6vbja857ke20660/manuscript.pdf?dl=0>)

Qiu, Xiaoyan. "State Support for Rebels and Interstate Bargaining." AJPS (2022).

**Week 11: Economics and conflict (4/11)**

Edward Miguel, Shanker Satyanath, and Ernest Sergenti. 2004. “Economic Shocks and Civil Conflict: An Instrumental Variables Approach,” Journal of Political Economy 112: 725-753. 2.

Jha, [Financial Asset Holdings and Political Attitudes: Evidence from Revolutionary England](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=934943), [*Quarterly Journal of Economics*](http://qje.oxfordjournals.org/content/130/3/1485.full.pdf), Vol. 103, No.3, August 2015.

Berman, Eli, et al. "Do working men rebel? Insurgency and unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55.4 (2011): 496-528.

Jha, Saumitra, and Moses Shayo. "Valuing peace: the effects of financial market exposure on votes and political attitudes." *Econometrica* 87, no. 5 (2019): 1561-1588.

**Week 12: Historical legacy and institutions (4/18)**

Voigtländer, Nico, and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127.3 (2012): 1339-1392.

Dell, Melissa. "The persistent effects of Peru's mining mita." *Econometrica* 78.6 (2010): 1863-1903.

Dell, Melissa. "Trafficking networks and the Mexican drug war." *The American Economic Review* 105.6 (2015): 1738-1779.

Carreri, Maria, and Oeindrila Dube. "Do natural resources influence who comes to power, and how?." *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 2 (2017): 502-518.

**Week 13: Presentations**

1. If you have any questions regarding course policies, you are expected to ask Prof. Schram. Failure to understand the policies will not be treated as an excuse for noncompliance. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)