

WAR AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Political Science 490, Spring 2007
Wednesdays, 2pm to 4:50pm in Scott 212

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Overview: The vast majority of wars since the end of the Second World War that occurred *within* countries rather than between them are the subject for this course. This is an interesting subject for several reasons. First, the world has seen a lot of internal wars in recent years. Second, the United States military is a combatant in two major ones (Iraq and Afghanistan) and has been engaged directly in some others (i.e., Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo) and indirectly in others (through numerous training and other aid programs) in recent years. Third, these wars present scholars with an intellectual quandary: Students of the historical development of institutions consider warfare to be a critical ingredient of state-building. Students of contemporary wars consider warfare to be a critical ingredient of state collapse. Do contemporary scholars suffer from the myopia of presentism, or has the nature of the warfare – state relationship undergone a fundamental shift? Finally, the study of war and political development offers wider intellectual payoffs in terms of conceptualizing the roles of violence, militia recruitment, and ideology in the development of political relationships and formal institutions.

It seems that it took the end of the Cold War to give a perspective for scholars to identify internal wars as a major threat to the capabilities of many states and as a threat to international order. The end of US-Soviet competition brought this trend clearly into view. More recent events have highlighted the problems of failed states, civil wars, and ethnic strife throughout parts of what used to be called the developing world and parts of the former socialist bloc. This course will provide students with the analytical tools for understanding and evaluating different explanations of the causes of these conflicts.

Are ethnic tensions, recent changes in great power strategies, religious extremism, colonialism, class warfare, resource competition, ideology or state failure to blame for these conflicts? Why and how do such wars end? What is the impact of international efforts to mediate these conflicts? The course will consider the impact of the nature of states and the international system in shaping these conflicts. This course will be especially useful for those who are interested in the politics of ethnic conflict, war and the international system, and correlates of war, among others.

This course is divided into five sections.

- The first section is called Section Zero because this class assumes no prior specialized knowledge of its subject. This section examines the magnitude of the contemporary phenomenon of internal wars. It considers the role of these wars in state building in history in Europe and asks whether contemporary internal wars

- can play such a role, and if not, why not. Some argue that contemporary wars are “new wars” and are different in terms of their internal dynamics and impacts, while others doubt that this is so.
- Section I focuses on individual and group-level explanations of causes of internal wars. Do greedy individuals cause these wars? Are contemporary armed groups akin to bandits or criminal syndicates? What is the role of ethnic identity in these conflicts? Is ethnicity simply an instrumental response to the uncertainties of warfare? How do material resource endowments shape how and whether people fight? Is there a place for ideology and grievances in a field of study that is dominated by materialist rational choice perspectives? What role does violence play in internal wars? Is it a cause of fighting or is it endogenous to a process of shaping the strategies of combatants?
 - The next section looks at elite politics and state-level explanations of internal wars. How do the defensive or ambitious strategies of elite groups influence these wars? Are contemporary studies of elite strategy smuggling in class analysis? What is the relationship of politics of elite survival and some of the micro-politics that we will study earlier?
 - Section III shifts the focus to structural-level considerations of the impact of changes in the international system of states on the evolution of internal wars. Has a special kind of “war-prone” state regime developed in the twentieth century that (alongside economic globalization) has created a basis for “new wars”? It also considers the impact of geography and environmental degradation. Are some states simply badly configured? Is the problem of environmental collapse a present or likely future cause of internal wars?
 - The final section would have been next if we operated on a semester system like much of the rest of North America. We would have considered international intervention and other elements of conflict management. What is the impact of international justice, either as a palliative or a deterrent to violence? (Patrick Johnston is writing his dissertation on this subject). How do pressures and evolving norms in the international community to promote democracy shape the behavior of armed groups? (This is the subject of the dissertation of Claire Metelits, which she will defend on the 7th of May). We will not be able to consider the vast topic of counterinsurgency and the impact of the Iraq War on internal warfare, though these considerations are relevant to the topics that we will study.

Therefore, this is not a course about international law or global norms and warfare, though these issues appear in many readings. It is not about conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction, although those with interests in these issues will find much of value in the material here. Finally, this is not a course about counterinsurgency, although those with such interests will find much of value in this seminar.

A matter that often arises among students of internal wars is the battle between the “ivory tower eggheads” and the “people of action”. Moreover, the latter tend to split between the NGO – international organization world (humanitarian workers, human rights lawyers, etc) and the military. They often disagree amongst themselves, while finding common ground that the eggheads have little to say that is useful for those on the ground. Eggheads do engage in trivia, but this instructor has tried to focus on the useful stuff. The practitioners actually can benefit from the big frameworks and the logics and questions that the scholars present. How does the instructor know? He has lived in and visited quite a few conflict areas, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo, Somalia,

Sudan, the Caucasus and a few others. Reality provides a good filter. He also has had to deal with these “people of action”, so he has a sense of what that world is like too.

Course requirements: There are two primary requirements for this class. The first is a paper due at the end of the term and the second consists of several opportunities to provide critical commentary on course material and fellow students’ analyses. This component of the course will contribute 60 % to the calculation of the final grade.

The Paper: This paper will be about 20 or so double spaced pages. A rough draft is due in class on the 16th of May. The final version of the paper is due on Monday, the 4th of June (Queen’s Birthday). First year graduate students may use this paper as a vehicle to try out ideas for their second year papers or explore topics that might be relevant to eventual dissertations. They also may use this paper as a basis for a review essay or an article for eventual submission to a scholarly journal for publication. Second year and other advanced students may want to use the paper as a way to develop a dissertation proposal, a grant proposal, or a chapter of a dissertation. Undergraduates will have the chance to develop a substantial writing sample for job or school applications.

“What should I write about?” There are several answers to that question. The list below provides suggestions and is not exhaustive.

1. An analytical paper will identify a significant problem related to the politics of internal wars. This can take either a comparative politics perspective, focusing on the dynamics among groups directly engaged in one or several conflicts, or it can consider the international dimension of internal conflicts or a combination of these approaches. The emphasis of this type of paper will be on constructing a model or a theory to explain a problem. It will not test the model or theory against a particular set of data. To do so would be to write:
2. An empirical paper will identify a significant problem related to internal wars, evaluate an existing set of policies designed to address this problem, propose a new way of approaching the problem that takes the reader beyond existing research, and use data to demonstrate the plausibility of this new argument. This type of paper can focus on a single case or it can examine a set of cases. Historical texts, ethnographic information, and statistical analyses of cross-national data all are appropriate sources of data. The author should justify the choice of data and evaluate its reliability.
3. A review essay would survey a body of work related to one aspect of internal wars. An essay of this type focuses on a coherent debate (or identifies one that ought to take place) and identifies avenues for future research. Several of the readings in this syllabus provide good examples of review essays.
4. A research proposal for a grant application or dissertation proposal would identify a significant problem related to internal wars. It would evaluate current approaches to addressing this problem and justify the need for additional research. It then develops a research design to address this absence.

Critical commentary consists of two response papers (20 % of total grade—10 % each), a commentary of a fellow student's rough draft of the class paper assignment (10 % of the total grade), and class participation (10 % of the total grade).

Response papers should be about three pages. These papers will help students formulate an interpretation of the readings, and will give a sense of how to approach prelim exam preparation. The week's readings should be summarized, but not at the expense of interpretation. The emphasis here is on the response. What do you consider to be unanswered questions in the reading? Draw connections between readings; their methods, data and conclusions. These essays may include all of the readings for one week or a subset of them. They do not need to include footnotes or a bibliography (except for references to works that are not included on the syllabus). Students will choose the weeks for their responses after the first class. **These essays should be sent to me by 5pm on the day before the class.**

The **commentary on student papers** will provide fellow students with constructive criticism and suggestions for their papers. Paper writers will provide a copy of their rough draft to fellow student commentators when submitting the rough drafts of papers to me on the 16th of May. Commentaries will be due to me after the Reading Week holiday (Monday the 4th of June). By this time commentary writers will have provided a copy of their comments to their paper writer. These commentaries can be as long or as short as one wants, so long as they are constructive.

Class participation (10 % of the total grade) requires one to read assignments prior to class in preparation to arrive at seminars with the ability to discuss them.

Readings: Many readings are contained in a reading packet available at Copycat on Sherman Avenue. The following books should be purchased.

Mary Kaldor (2001) *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford University Press.

Barbara Walter & Jack Snyder, eds. (1999) *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention*, Columbia University Press. **[Recommended]**

Roger Peterson (2004) *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*, Cambridge University Press.

Stathis Kalyvas (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge University Press.

Monica Duffy Toft (2003) *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

V.P. Gagnon, Jr (2004) *The Myth of Ethnic War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press)

Jeremy Weinstein (2007) *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*, (Cambridge University Press).

Scott Strauss (2006) *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

My manuscript, *Evolution of Warfare in Independent Africa*, (I will provide this to you.)

I will hand out primary source materials related to insurgencies and political development throughout the course. These are materials that I have collected from among armed groups in Africa and the former Soviet Union.

CLASS CALENDAR

Section Zero: Overview & Empirical Evidence

28 March: Why have internal wars historically been associated with state-building, yet contemporary internal wars are associated with state collapse? How has the nature of this warfare – state construction relationship changed? Do wars of the 1990s and later really mark the advent of “new” wars? How has the development of “globalization” influenced the behavior of armed groups? Are wars in the global periphery “post-state” these days, or do they reflect the nature of political authority in existing states (and are these propositions mutually exclusive)?

Charles Tilly (1985) “War Making and State making as Organized Crime,” in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer & Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In*, (New York: Cambridge), 169-91.

Charles Tilly (1992) “Soldiers and States in 1992,” in his *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992*, (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell), 192-227.

Mary Kaldor (2001) *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press). [**Book that you purchased**]

Stathis Kalyvas (2001) “‘New’ and ‘Old’ Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?”, *World Politics*, 54:1, 99-118.

Kimberley Martin (2006/07) “Warlordism in Comparative Perspective,” *International Security*, 31:3 (Winter), 41-73.

Section I: Individual and Group-Level Explanations of Internal Wars

4 April: Individual and group-level theories and approaches, I: The responses of rational actors to the incentives around them and the responses of others to the emergence of associated threats. Security dilemmas, both individual and group, and other ideas from International relations can be applied to internal wars. Are ethnic wars really “ethnic?”

Russell Hardin (1995) “Self Interest, Group Identity,” Albert Breton, et al., *Nationalism and Rationality*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 14-42.

James Fearon & David Laitin (2003) “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil Wars,” *American Political Science Review*, 97:1 (Feb), 75-90.

Jack Snyder & Robert Jervis (1999) “Civil War and the Security Dilemma,” Barbara Walter & Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insurgency, and Intervention*, Columbia, 15-37. **In the recommended text or available in the reading packet**

Donald Horowitz (2000) “Conflict Theory and Conflict Motives,” *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* [2nd edition], Berkeley: University of California Press, 95-140.

Rui de Figueiredo, Jr. & Barry Weingast (1999) “The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict,” Barbara Walter & Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insurgency, and Intervention*, Columbia, 261-302. **In the recommended text or available in the reading packet**

Charles King (2001) “the Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia’s Unrecognized States,” *World Politics*, 53 (July), 524-52.

11 April: Individual and group-level theories and approaches, II: The role of resources [‘greed’] in creating war economies. The rewards of conflict: The calculations of leaders and followers, the organization of recruitment, and the impact of incentive structures on the organization and behavior of armed groups.

Jeremy Weinstein (2007) *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*, (Cambridge University Press). **[Book that you purchased]**
For those searching for a review of this book, one of the more provocative ones is Stathis Kalyvas’s review in *Comparative Political Studies*, 40:9 (Sept 2007), 1146-51.

Paul Collier (2000), “Rebellion as a Quasi-criminal Activity,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 44:6, 839-53.

Michael Ross (2004) “What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil Wars?” *Journal of Peace Research*, 41:3 (Summer), 337-56.

Stephen Stedman & Fred Tanner (2003) "Refugees as Resources in War," in their edited volume, *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics, and the Abuse of Human Suffering*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1-16.

For a contrary view:

Stuart Kaufman (2006) "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence," *International Security*, 30:4 (Spring), 45-86.

(Kaufman earlier wrote (2001) *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press)

18 April: Individual and Group-level theories and approaches, III: The role of 'grievance' in generating conflict. Do theories of ethnic conflict properly consider the place of emotion to answer the question of individual motivation?

Roger Peterson (2004) *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*, (Cambridge University Press). **[Book that you purchased]**

You also may wish to consult the debate in Arman Grigorian & Stuart Kaufman (2007) "Correspondence: Hate Narratives and Ethnic Conflict," *International Security*, 31:4 (Spring), 180-91. .

25 April: Individual and group-level theories and approaches III: The questionable role of allegiances and ideology and the importance of 'intimate violence'. Do grievances matter? Separating causes of internal wars from the process of civil wars.

Stathis Kalyvas (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). **[Book that you purchased]**

Section II: Elite Politics and State-Level Explanations of Internal Wars

2 May: State-Level I: Elite competition and the maneuvers of defensive elite groups, the preservation of privilege and the manufacture of conflict. What are the implications of elite intransigence in the formulation of international responses to internal war? How can democratization provoke internal conflicts?

V.P. Gagnon, Jr. (2004) *The Myth of Ethnic War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press) **[book that you purchased]**

Jack Snyder (2000) "Transitions to Democracy and the Rise of Nationalist Conflicts," in his *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, (New York: W.W. Norton), 15-43.

9 May: State-level II: The relationship of state power to 'thugs' and other micro-level aspects of internal wars studied earlier in this course

Scott Strauss (2006) *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press). **[Book that you purchased]**

16 May: State-level III: Clientelism and violence. Are internal wars particular to certain kinds of state regimes? Is warfare in 'collapsed states' a different or distinctive phenomenon from wars in other places? Do these wars cause state collapse or does state collapse cause these wars?

I will inflict upon you the partial manuscript of my *Evolution of Warfare in Independent Africa*, which is currently under contract at Cambridge University Press.

Kent Eaton (2006) "The Downside of Decentralization: Armed Clientelism in Colombia," *Security Studies*, 15: 4 (Oct-Dec), 533-62.

Section III: Macro-Level Explanations of Internal Wars

23 May: Macro-level I: The international system of states, or legacies of colonialism and decolonization? Returning to the question of the impact of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of a bi-polar international system

Robert Rotberg (2003) "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," In Rotberg, ed., *State Failures and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, Brookings Institution Press, 1-25.

Robert Jackson & Carl Rosberg (1982) "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," *World Politics*, (Oct), 1-24.

Mark Beissinger & Crawford Young (2002) "Governance to Crisis: Pre-Independence State Legacies and Post-Independence State Breakdown in Africa and Eurasia," in their ed. *Beyond State Crisis? Postcolonial Africa and Post-Soviet Eurasia in Comparative Perspective*, (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press), 19-50.

William Reno (2003) "The Changing Nature of Warfare and the Absence of State-Building in West Africa," in Diane Davis & Anthony Pereira, eds., *Irregular Armed Forces and Their Role in Politics and State Formation*, (New York: Cambridge University Press), 322-45.

Kalevi Holsti (2004) "War," in his *Taming the Sovereigns: Institutional Change in International Politics*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 275-99.

30 May: Macro-level II: Environment and geography as causes of internal wars.

Colin Kahl (1998) "Population Growth, Environmental Degradation, and State-Sponsored Violence: The Case of Kenya," *International Security*, 23:2 (Fall), 80-119.

Monica Duffy Toft (2003) *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identities, Interests and the Indivisibility of Territory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. **[Book that you purchased]**

Section IV: Some Major Topics That Were Left Out

The term system leaves us with tragically short seminars. If we had more time, we might have considered the issue of international intervention in these conflicts. What is the record of intervention? Is it an effective antidote to internal conflict? What about international justice? Does the threat of prosecution for crimes against humanity deter or otherwise shape the behavior of combatants in internal wars? Can counterinsurgency work as a means of mitigating conflict? What is the impact of the war in Iraq on the study of internal wars and political development? One could devote an entire seminar to these and other topics.