

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 6186.27
CIVIL WAR, INSURGENCY, AND TERRORISM
Elliott School of International Affairs
The George Washington University

Fall 2011
Time: Wednesday, 5.10-7.00PM
Room: 1957 E St. NW, #313
Office Hours: Tuesday, 3.30-5.00PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Civil war is the most common form of armed conflict today. Well over one hundred civil wars have been fought since the end of World War II, compared to roughly thirty interstate wars. Civil wars are also extremely deadly, causing the deaths of millions of people, the majority of them noncombatants. The end of the Cold War focused the attention of scholars of comparative politics and international relations on civil conflict, leading to an explosion of literature on all facets of civil war, including civil war onset, duration, outcomes, and termination; causes and effectiveness of targeting civilians (a.k.a., terrorism) in civil wars; why people join rebel groups or decide to become terrorists; the effectiveness of various forms of intervention in civil wars; counterinsurgency; and more.

This course explores some of the new literature on civil war, and is divided into three parts. The first part looks at the causes of civil war. War is a costly and risky endeavor, and rebels face particularly steep odds going up against states that are typically far more powerful. Why then do civil wars occur? Which kinds of factors increase the odds that civil conflict will break out?

The second part of the course examines the conduct of civil wars with an emphasis on one particularly prevalent but unsavory practice: violence against civilians. Civil wars—the majority of which are waged as guerrilla insurgencies—place the civilian population directly in the middle of the contest: insurgents need civilian support to survive and thrive, while the government seeks to deny rebels access to the population. Both sides use violence as a resource to compel collaboration and deter defection. This type of “terrorism” is both very common and underappreciated. The course will study the causes and effectiveness of this kind of terrorism, as well as terrorism perpetrated by groups specifically labeled as terrorist organizations.

The final section of the course looks at what makes civil wars last so long and what eventually brings them to an end. Of particular interest is the question of what (if anything) outsiders can do to facilitate the termination of civil wars and prevent their recurrence.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

The most important goal of the course is to impart to students a solid understanding of theories and empirical evidence regarding the causes, conduct, and termination of civil wars. This will be achieved by reading the required material, discussing it in class, and writing short critical response papers to the readings. A second goal is for each student to develop expertise in a particular country and conflict by writing a research paper on some aspect of one civil war. Not only will students become well-versed in their chosen conflict, they will be able to apply theories learned in the course to cases and see how well they perform. A third goal is educate students regarding the different types of civil wars that exist, as well as the different forms of violence that are currently consolidated under the rubric of “terrorism.” A final goal is to shed light on current U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and their prospects for success.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to critically evaluate social science theories, not only those about civil wars, but theories in general.
- Students will be able to identify risk factors that make states vulnerable to civil war.
- Students will be able to determine which civil wars are more prone to violence and terrorism against noncombatants, and what type of violence it will be.
- Students will be able to evaluate the relative efficacy of different forms of violence used by actors in civil wars, and the conditions under which these strategies may be more or less effective.
- Students will be able to make informed conjectures about which side will prevail in civil war.
- Students will be able to evaluate the merits of “hearts and minds” counterinsurgency strategies as applied by the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE COMPUTATION

The course is organized into one two-hour seminar meeting per week. Students are expected to attend every class session, do all of the required reading before class, and come prepared to discuss it. Grades will be based on the following criteria.

- **Class Attendance and Participation (20%):** Participation will be judged not only by the quantity of a student’s remarks, but also by their quality. Students who miss multiple class sessions may be asked to write reaction papers for the classes they miss.
- **Reaction Papers (20%):** Two short (5 pages double-spaced maximum) papers critiquing the readings for class sessions of the student’s choice (a sign-up sheet will be circulated). Papers should be EMAILED to the instructor by 9.00AM on the day of class. These papers should not merely summarize the reading; rather, they should engage a common theme, develop a line of criticism, discuss theoretical, empirical, or methodological flaws or shortcomings or new directions for research.
- **Research Paper (50%):** 20-25 pages, HARD COPY due in instructor’s office by 5.00PM on Friday, December 16. A 2-3 page memo on your topic is due September 28. For more details, see below.
- **Presentation of Research Paper (10%):** 10 minute briefing on your research paper at one of the final two class sessions, followed by questions from the audience.

POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- **Class Policies.** Students are expected to attend every class session, do all the reading before class, and come prepared to discuss it. Exceptions will of course be made for religious holidays. Students who know they will miss class owing to observance of a religious holiday need to notify the instructor during the first week of the semester. Late papers will be accepted only in cases of extraordinary personal or family emergency; if you find yourself in such a situation, consult the instructor as soon as possible. Laptops are allowed in class for note-taking purposes, not for checking e-mail, Facebook, or surfing the web. The only cell phones allowed in class are those that have been turned off.
- **Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Integrity.** According to the university’s Code of Academic Integrity, “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the rest of the code, see <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. In general, I expect that you will not lie, cheat, steal, or otherwise conduct yourselves dishonorably, and will do something if you observe others engaging in such conduct. All work you submit for this course must be your own. I will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Suspected cases will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity. If you have questions about what constitutes proper use of published or unpublished sources, please ask the instructor.

- **Disabilities.** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202.994.8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>.
- **Counseling.** The University Counseling Center (UCC, 202.994.5300) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include crisis and emergency mental health consultations, confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals (see <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>).
- **Security.** In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

READINGS, ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

No books are required for purchase. All of the journal articles listed in the required reading below are available online in databases accessible through the George Washington University Library. From the library website (<http://www.library.gwu.edu/>), search "E-Journals" for the desired title and navigate to the correct volume and issue. If you are accessing the library website from off campus, you will need to enter your last name and your GWID to obtain access. For several class sessions I have assigned book chapters in addition to journal articles. These are placed on E-Reserve, and are indicated by the term "e-res" in parentheses after the citation. These texts are easily obtained through the Blackboard site that has been established for the class. Click on "Blackboard" from the "My GW" page (<http://my.gwu.edu>), log in, go to the page for this class, and click on "E-Reserves."

RESEARCH PAPER

In consultation with the instructor, students will select a civil war that will form the subject of their paper and about which they will become experts. The goal of the paper will not be to "explain" the entire conflict from start to finish, however. Rather, students will answer a particular question (chosen in consultation with the instructor) about the war, such as (but not limited to):

- What caused the war?
- What patterns of violence characterized the conflict, and what explains them?
- Why did one side prevail?
- Was there external intervention, and did it facilitate a lasting settlement?
- If the conflict reignited, why did peace fail to last?

Papers are expected to engage the theoretical literature examined in class that relates to the question addressed in the paper. Papers that attempt to explain civil war onset, for example, should incorporate the literature from the beginning of the course on causes of civil war.

All students must turn in a brief 2-3 page memo in class on **September 28** that performs four tasks:

- States which war will be the focus of your paper
- States which specific aspect of the conflict you intend to explore
- Provides a short background and summary of the conflict
- Lists 3-5 books or articles you have identified as potential sources of information

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor at their earliest convenience to discuss their interests and get started on the paper. It is not mandatory to have a meeting before the memo is due, but I will schedule conferences with each student after the memos are turned in.

See the appendix at the end of the syllabus for some resources on civil wars to help you get started.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I. Introduction

1. Course Introduction August 31
 - Lotta Themnér and Peter Wallensteen, “Armed Conflict, 1946-2010,” *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 4 (July 2011): 525-536.
2. Definitions September 7
 - Nicholas Sambanis, “What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 2004): 814-858.
 - Stathis N. Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict,” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (August 2010): 415-429.
 - Stathis N. Kalyvas, “‘New’ and ‘Old’ Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?” *World Politics* 54, no. 1 (October 2001): 99-118.
 - John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 15-33 (**e-res**).
 - Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 16-31 (**e-res**).
 - Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 13-44 (**e-res**).

Part II. Causes of Civil War

3. Causes of Civil War, Part I: Ethnicity September 14
 - Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 27-47.
 - James D. Fearon, “Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict,” in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation*, ed. David Lake and Donald Rothchild (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998) (**e-res**).
 - James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, “Sons of the Soil, Migrants, and Civil War,” *World Development* 39, no. 2 (February 2011): 199-211.
 - V. P. Gagnon, Jr., “Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia,” *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 130-166.
 - Adria Lawrence, “Triggering Nationalist Violence: Competition and Conflict in Uprisings against Colonial Rule,” *International Security* 35, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 88-122.
4. Causes of Civil War, Part II: Grievance/Resentment September 21
 - Roger Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 17-61 (**e-res**).
 - Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, “Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis,” *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (January 2010): 87-119.
 - Lars-Erik Cederman, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, “Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist War: A Global Comparison,” *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 3 (August 2011).
 - Carles Boix, “Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World,” *World Politics* 60, no. 3 (2008): 390-437.
 - Nicholas Sambanis, “Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry (Part I),” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 3 (June 2001): 259-282.

5. Causes of Civil War, Part III: Opportunity/Greed September 28
Paper Topic Memo Due in Class

- James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February 2003): 75-90.
- Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (October 2004): 563-595.
- Michael L. Ross, "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9, no. 1 (2006): 265-300.
- Macartan Humphreys, "Natural Resources, Conflict, and Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 4 (August 2005): 508-537.
- Nicholas Sambanis, "Using Case Studies to Expand Economic Models of Civil War," *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 2 (June 2004): 259-279.

Part III. Conduct of Civil Wars

6. Causes of Violence and Terrorism in Civil War, Part I October 5

- Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars," *Rationality and Society* 11, no. 3 (August 1999): 243-285.
- Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 198-259 (e-res).
- Lisa Hultman, "Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 205-222.
- Laia Balcells, "Rivalry and Revenge: Violence against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars," *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (June 2010): 291-313.

7. Causes of Violence and Terrorism in Civil War, Part II October 12

- Alan Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is there a Causal Connection?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 119-144.
- Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (August 2003): 343-361.
- Mia M. Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 61-88.
- Assaf Moghadam, "Motives for Martyrdom: Al-Qaida, Salafi Jihad, and the Spread of Suicide Attacks," *International Security* 33, no. 3 (Winter 2009): 46-78.
- James A. Piazza, "A Supply-Side View of Suicide Terrorism: A Cross-National Study," *Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (January 2008): 28-39.

8. Effectiveness of Violence and Terrorism in Civil War October 19

- Stathis N. Kalyvas, "The Paradox of Terrorism in Civil War," *Journal of Ethics* 8, no. 1 (March 2004): 97-138.
- Jason M. Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Repression Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (2009): 331-362.
- Matthew Adam Kocher, Thomas B. Pepinsky, and Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War," *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 2 (March 2011): 201-218.
- Alexander B. Downes, "Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy," *Civil Wars* 9, no. 4 (December 2007): 420-444.
- Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 42-78.

9. Counterinsurgency

October 26

- Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), 196-206 (**e-res**).
- Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 33-47 (**e-res**).
- David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 107-135 (**e-res**).
- *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, December 2006), Chapter 1, available online at <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf> (a.k.a., *The U.S. Army/Marine Counterinsurgency Field Manual*).
- David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* 86, no. 3 (May-June 2006): 103-108.
- Jacqueline L. Hazelton, *Compellence and Accommodation in Counterinsurgency Warfare* (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 2011), Chapters 2-3 (**Blackboard**).

10. Civil War Duration and Alliances

November 2

- Fotini Christia, *The Closest of Enemies: Alliance Formation in Civil Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), Chapters 1-5 (**Blackboard**).
- James D. Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer Than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 275-302.
- David Cunningham, "Veto Players and Civil War Duration," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (October 2006): 875-892.

11. NO CLASS: Instructor Traveling

November 9

12. Case Study: Iraq

November 16

- Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), 217-249 (**e-res**).
- Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 200-227 (**e-res**).
- Douglas Ollivant, "Countering the New Orthodoxy: Reinterpreting Counterinsurgency in Iraq," New America Foundation Policy Paper, June 28, 2011 (**Blackboard**).
- John Agnew, Thomas W. Gillespie, Jorge Gonzalez, and Brian Min, "Baghdad Nights: Evaluating the U.S. Military 'Surge' Using Nighttime Light Signatures," *Environment and Planning* 40, no. 10 (2008): 2285-2295.
- Marc Lynch, "Explaining the Awakening: Engagement, Publicity, and the Transformation of Iraqi Sunni Political Attitudes," *Security Studies* 20, no. 1 (2011): 36-72.
- Austin Long, "The Anbar Awakening," *Survival* 50, no. 2 (April/May 2008): 67-94.

13. NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

November 23

Part IV. Civil War Outcomes and Termination

14. Civil War Outcomes November 30
- Andrew J. R. Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (January 1975): 175-200.
 - Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26, no. 1 (Summer 2001): 93-128.
 - Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, III, "Rage against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organization* 63, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 67-106.
 - Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3-32 (**e-res**).
15. Ending Civil War (Make-Up Day) December 6
- Chaim Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1996): 136-175.
 - Barbara F. Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 335-364.
 - Caroline Hartzell, "Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 1 (February 1999): 3-22.
 - Virginia Page Fortna, "Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace after Civil War," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (June 2004): 269-292.
 - Monica Duffy Toft, "Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?" *International Security* 34, no. 4 (Spring 2010): 7-36.
 - Student Presentations
16. Student Presentations December 7
17. Research Paper Due December 16
- By 5.00PM, 1957 E St. NW, #605B

APPENDIX: LISTS OF CIVIL WARS

Good lists of civil wars may be found in the following articles, books, or locations on the web.

- Correlates of War Project Intrastate War Data, v. 4.0 (1816-2007)
 - <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>
- Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "A Revised List of Wars between and within Independent States, 1816-2002," *International Interactions* 30, no. 3 (July-September 2004): 231-262.
- James Fearon and David Laitin's list of civil wars (1945-1999) used in their 2003 *APSR* article
 - <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/papers/addtabs.pdf> (pp. 7-10)
- Nicholas Sambanis's civil war data (1945-1999)
 - <http://pantheon.yale.edu/~ns237/index/research.html#Civil> (scroll down to "Data")
 - See also his coding notes at the same url
- UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (1946-2010)
 - http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset/
 - These data contain four different conflict types: extrasystemic, interstate, internal, and internationalized internal. See the codebook for definitions. Only interstate (type = 2) are clearly not civil wars.
 - Note also the lower fatality threshold for a conflict to be included in the dataset
- Political Instability Task Force, Internal Wars and Failures of Governance (1955-2008)
 - <http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/pitfdata.htm>
 - See also the list of episodes of political instability in Jack A. Goldstone et al., "A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability," *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 1 (January 2010): 190-208.

Broadly similar lists of civil wars for the post-World War II period may be found in several books and articles:

- Nicholas Sambanis, "Partition as a Solution to Ethnic War: An Empirical Critique of the Theoretical Literature," *World Politics* 52, no. 4 (July 2000): 437-483.
- Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (December 2000): 779-801.
- Virginia Page Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008).
- Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the Peace: The Durable Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Finally, for a good general reference on armed conflict, see:

- Micheal Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts: A Statistical Encyclopedia of Casualty and other Figures, 1494-2007*, 3rd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008).