

PREVIOUS RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

My previous research has concerned political institutions and conflict, spurred in part by my personal experience in combat. I also have an interest in Latin America and the mobilization of ethnic minorities. In graduate school I focused my attention on worldwide conflict behavior. My current research agenda aims at merging the research on civil war processes with theories of international conflict behavior and developing an empirical understanding of regime type.

As an undergraduate at Clemson University I collaborated with Dr. Zeynep Taydas on a review paper on the evolution of civil war research. The purpose of our review was to understand how far scholars have come in advancing the literature. We reveal that scholars may not have fully considered how the timing of new research questions affects the resolution of earlier debates. We offered an historical appraisal of conventional empirical models of civil war. We highlighted scholars' general inability to use their work to help answer earlier questions. As the primary author, my role in the project required me to evaluate the literature and write the final product. My involvement in the paper helped to solidify my understanding of important theories in civil war onset. Moreover, our review of how the civil war literature has developed encouraged scholars to incorporate pre-existing research objectives as part of their own. The manuscript is currently under review for publication at *Civil Wars*.

In a second project I collaborated with faculty and students from the Department of Education in a study examining the effect of various teaching methods on student performance in university-level Calculus. Our study highlighted a pilot problem-solving process used to aid Calculus instruction, using iClicker technology. The study was centrally concerned with improving education in math; by critically evaluating how math is learned, we can more effectively integrate next-generation technological tools in the classroom. My role in the study involved helping to design and implement the study, the results of which our team presented at a national education conference in the same year.

In my final year of my undergraduate study, I took an independent-study course jointly conducted through the departments of Political Science and Languages. As the sole researcher, I explored the following question: *how does ethnicity affect one's ability to migrate internationally via legal channels?* Over three months, I developed and distributed 420 surveys to Indian and *mestizo* households in three regions of Otavalo, Ecuador, and four nearby districts. The responses suggested the presence of an ethnocentric migration pattern: accounting for other important determinants of international migration, indigenous respondents who have access to a market for ethnic goods travel significantly more than their *mestizo* counterparts. The inequality in visa provision has heightened tensions in mixed migrant communities in highland Ecuador. The aim of my study was to improve communal relations and to highlight the inaccessibility of migration opportunities to discriminated groups. In addition to calling attention to migrant opportunity, my project connected public schools in highland Ecuador with schools in the United States. The project culminated in an honors thesis which won a college-wide award for the most meritorious research project of the year. I have presented the manuscript at the 2009 Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) meeting and the 2010 Pennsylvania State University Graduate Exhibition. The manuscript is under review at the *Journal of Ethnicity and Migration*.

During my first year as a graduate student I completed methods courses covering methods of political analysis, statistics and math for political science research, multivariate analysis, and maximum likelihood estimation. Substantive classes include the international relations of civil war, interstate conflict, and democratization. The research that I have performed for these courses directly contributes to the literature on regime type and institutional effects. Building on Geddes' (2003) seminal work, I examined intrastate armed conflicts

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between 1946 and 1999 involving authoritarian regimes. I demonstrated that the structural differences that make leader turnover more likely and that make them less credible predict their likelihood of experiencing civil conflict. Military regimes are the most likely to engage in conflict; personalist regimes are also more likely to observe conflict, and regimes with single-party features are less likely, overall. These findings were consistent with the latest work on the institutional determinants of civil war. The manuscript has been accepted for presentation at the 2011 International Studies Association meeting in Montreal, QC.

With the help of funding from the National Science Foundation's Graduate Fellowship Program, I hope to extend my latest research to examine how the domestic conflict propensity of authoritarian regimes affects their likelihood of engaging in international disputes. This is a research question that is of interest to academics and global security overall. In examining these arguments, my proposed study combines explanations for domestic peace with explanations for the international conflict behavior of authoritarian regimes. Specifically, military regimes face constant threats from domestic challengers. As a result of their instability they are more likely to exacerbate international tensions. They are, however, less capable of engaging opponents when domestic armed conflict levels rise. Conflict studies frequently control for the power capabilities of states, but they leave unacknowledged those soldiers who *cannot* fight. These are prominent in military regimes—officers who become legislators and executives cannot adhere to a consistent national defense objective. The novel methods and data coming out of this research offer substantial benefits for the field and for crisis monitoring. Developing this idea will constitute my Master's thesis and eventually my dissertation, with help from Dr. Gretchen Casper, Dr. Doug Lemke, and Dr. Joseph Wright. I have been accepted to present preliminary findings on this subject at the 2011 MPSA meeting in Chicago, IL.

In addition to my personal research I have performed secondary research roles for professors. In my undergraduate career I worked closely with Dr. Zeynep Taydas in the Department of Political Science at Clemson University. In support of her research I wrote accounts on the emergence of political parties in Turkey and India and reviewed a manuscript on ethnic salience in civil war. In return for my contributions I received mention in several of her manuscripts. My first graduate assignment was a research assistantship under Dr. Glenn Palmer, developing the Correlates of War Militarized Interstate Dispute dataset. As part of a student team working to replace the dataset with a newer version (4.0), I compiled news reports on incidents between states, verified that they were militarized and hostile, and wrote narratives of the relevant events. In subsequent assignments I have worked for Dr. Palmer organizing annual conferences for the Peace Science Society, a forum that facilitates discussion among researchers across the discipline. I manage journal subscriptions and memberships for the society and schedule departmental presentations on new research in international relations.

Manuscripts under review:

"Developing the Literature on Civil War Onset: Evolving Concepts and Models." at *Civil Wars*.

(with Dr. Zeynep Taydas, Clemson University)

"Legal Migration and Ethnic Group Competition: Assessing Survey Responses from Highland Ecuador." at the *Journal of Ethnicity and Migration*.

Conference Presentations:

"Legal Migration and Ethnic Group Competition: Assessing Survey Responses from Highland Ecuador," Presented at the 2010 Graduate Exhibition, March 2010, Penn State University.

"Determinants of Household Migration from an Ethnic Perspective." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, April 2009, Chicago.

"Fun and Games: Results from a Team Approach to SI Session Content Development" (with Eric Moschella, Thomas Godwin, David Hyde-Volpe, and Kristin Raimondi). Presented at the Annual Supplemental Instruction International Conference, December 2008, Orlando.