

372: Ethnic Conflict: Causes and Remedies
Spring 2012
MW 11:30-1:00 pm, Seigle Hall L002

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm
Office Location: Seigle 259

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of ethnic conflicts and the various institutional arrangements to contain them. During the course, we will read classic and recent scholarly works that address various aspects of these issues using different methods and approaches. In the first part, we will review the key debates on the concept of ethnic identity and its implications for the study of ethnic conflict. In the second part, we will study cross-national determinants of ethnic conflict. Then, we will shift our focus to theories of ethnic conflict in order to understand examples from different parts of the world where conflict among different groups has resulted in varying degrees of violence: USA, former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and India. In the last part, we will study prescriptions of institutional design for peace and stability in ethnically divided societies. Throughout the course, we will aim to answer the following questions:

1. How do ethnic identities become politically relevant?
2. What causes ethnic groups to engage in violent conflict?
3. Which institutional arrangements make peace among members of different ethnic groups more likely?

Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites. No math knowledge beyond a high school level math is assumed. Simple game theory and statistics will be introduced if necessary during the lectures to help students better understand the reading material. Students are not required to understand the mathematical aspects of the papers, but they are required to know and understand the logic of the arguments and to be able to explain and discuss it in words.

Grading Policy and Requirements

Grades will be based on participation (10%), one in-class presentation (15%), in-class midterm (25%), and a take-home final exam (50%).

Participation - 10%

Students are required to attend all class meetings. Missing more than 2 meetings without a doctor's note will result in a lower participation grade. Students are required to notify the

instructor by e-mail if they intend to miss a class, and to provide a formal note from a doctor covering the days on which the student was absent. Students are expected to read the required material before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss it.

Midterm - 25%

There will be an in-class midterm on March 5 that will cover all the material from the beginning of the semester through February 29. The midterm questions will be either multiple choice or will require very short answers.

There will be no make-up exams, unless a student cannot attend the exam on the original date due to a medical or a family emergency. A doctor's note covering the original exam date will be required to schedule a make-up exam.

Presentation - 15%

At each meeting, students will present readings assigned for that session. As you read through the syllabus, you will see that there are a few meetings in which we will read a single paper or we will read chapters from a single book. In those meetings, students will divide the task of presenting the same paper or the assigned chapters. A sign-up sheet with the list of papers will be placed on the instructor's office door on January 19th. All students must sign up for a presentation by January 27th. Not signing up on time may result in a loss of 15 points. Each presentation will be 10 minutes. Your presentation should consist of summarizing the arguments made and evidence presented by authors, as well as giving your own judgment of how convincing the claims are. Students are encouraged to use the attached list of questions while preparing their presentations, but they are not required to cover all of these questions, and can also come up with their own points or issues to address in the presentation. In addition to the oral presentation, you should make your slides or talking points available to the class and the instructor at least 1 hour before the presentation by e-mailing them. You are strongly encouraged to discuss your presentation during my office hours. I will be happy to read preliminary drafts of your presentation.

Final Exam - 50%

The final exam will be a take-home exam consisting of several essay-type questions. The questions will be distributed on April 30, and the students will return their final exams by e-mail to the instructor by May 7, 5 pm CST. Students are not allowed to collaborate while working on the exam. Students should work independently on their final exam essays. Submission of collaborative exams will lead to disciplinary actions as described below (see Cheating and Plagiarism). There will be no make-up exams or deadline extensions, unless a student cannot attend or submit the exam on the original date due to a medical or a family emergency. A doctor's note covering the original exam period will be required to schedule a make-up exam.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism during the midterm and the final essay will not be tolerated. Students should work on their exams independently. For definitions of cheating, plagiarism, and the severe

consequences of such behavior please review the Washington University policy online at <http://wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html>.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 18 - Introduction and course logistics

PART I

Week 2a: January 23 - On the Nature and Prevalence of Ethnic Conflict

- Mueller, Jerry. 2008. Us and Them: The Enduring Power of Nationalism. *Foreign Affairs*.
- Habyarimana, James, Jeremy Weinstein, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel Posner. 2008. Better Institutions, Not Partition. *Foreign Affairs*.
- Fearon, James. 1991. Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science. *World Politics* 43(2):169-195.

Week 2b: January 25 - Conceptualizing Ethnic Identity and Conflict

- Horowitz, Donald. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press. Chapters 1 and 2.
- Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. "What is Ethnic Identity and Does it Matter?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 397-424.
- Fearon, James. 2006. "Ethnic Mobilization and Ethnic Violence." in Barry Weingast and Donald Wittman. eds. *Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*

Week 3a: January 30 - Primordialism

- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States in *Old Societies and New States*. New York: Basic Books. pp 105-128.
- Huntington, Samuel. 1993. The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22-49.

Week 3b: February 1 - Primordialism II

- Connor, Walker. 1993. Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 16 (3): 373-89.
- Stephen Van Evera. Primordialism Lives! *APSA Comparative Politics Section Newsletter* 12 (1): 20-22.

Week 4a: February 6 - Constructivism

- Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Chapters 1,5 and 6. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities* London: Verso. Chapters 1-3.

Week 4b: February 8 - Instrumentalism: Ethnic Groups as Coalitions in Economic and Political Competition

- Bates, Robert. 1974. Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa. *Comparative Political Studies* 6(4): 457-84.
- Posner, Daniel. 2004. The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi. *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): 529-45.

PART II

Week 5a: February 13 - Big Picture: Cross-National Patterns of Ethnic Conflict

- Fearon, James and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90
- Montalvo, Jose and Marta Reynal-Querol. 2005 "Ethnic Polarization, Potential Conflict and Civil Wars." *American Economic Review* 95(3): 796-816.

Week 5b: February 15 - Big Picture: Cross-National Patterns of Ethnic Conflict II

- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. 2010. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *World Politics*, 62 (1): 87-119.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review*, 105(3): 478-95.

Week 6a: February 20 - Struggle for Relative Group Worth

- Horowitz, Donald. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Chapters 3-5.

Week 6b: February 22 - Struggle for Relative Group Worth

- Selections from Autobiography of Malcolm X. 1965. Random House Publishing.

Week 7a: February 27 - Rationalist Accounts

- James Fearon. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Week 7b: February 29 - Rationalist Accounts II

- James Fearon. 1998. "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict" in David Lake and Donald Rothchild eds. *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp 107-126.

- Rui DeFigueiredo and Barry R. Weingast. 1999. “The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict.” In *Civil War, Insecurity, and Intervention*, ed. Jack L. Snyder and Barbara F. Walter. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Week 8a: March 5

- In-class midterm.

Week 8b: March 7

- Excerpts from Two Documentaries: 1. Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation, 2. Ghosts of Rwanda

Week 9: March 12 & March 14 - Spring break

- No class.

Week 10a: March 19 - Electoral Incentives

- Steven Wilkinson. 2004. *Votes and Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1,2, and 5.

Week 10b: March 21 - Civic Networks

- Ashutosh Varshney. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1,2, 4 and Chapter 12.

Week 11a: March 26 - Emotion-Based Accounts

- Roger D. Petersen. 2002. *Understanding Ethnic Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-4.

PART III

Week 11b: March 28 - Decentralized Institutional Mechanisms

- James Fearon and David Laitin 1996. “Explaining Inter-Ethnic Cooperation”. *American Political Science Review* 90(4): 715-35.

Week 12a: April 2 - Consociationalism and Power-Sharing

- Arendt Lijphart. 2004. “Constitutional Design for Divided Societies”. *Journal of Democracy* 15(2): 96-109.
- Arendt Lijphart. 1977. *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chs 1 and 2.

Week 12b: April 4 - Consociationalism and Power-Sharing II

- Pippa Norris. 2002. "Ballots not Bullets: Testing Consociational Theories of Ethnic Conflict, Electoral Systems and Democratization." in Andrew Reynolds, ed., *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford University Press. pp. 206-247.
- Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. "Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management", *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2): 318-332.

Week 13a: April 9 - Electoral Systems

- Benjamin Reilly. 2001. *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management* New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-4.

Week 13b: April 11 - Electoral Systems II

- Donald Horowitz. 2002. "Constitutional Design: Proposals versus Processes." in Andrew Reynolds, ed., *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford University Press. pp. 15-36.
- Pippa Norris. 2004. *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior* New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 9.

Week 14a: April 16 - Federalism and Decentralization

- Kristin Bakke and Erik M. Wibbels. 2006. "Diversity, Disparity, and Civil Conflict in Federal States." *World Politics* 59: 1-50.
- Dawn Brancati. 2006. "Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism", *International Organization*, 60: 651-685.

Week 14b: April 18 - Partition

- Chaim Kaufman. 1996. "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic War." *International Security* 20 (4): 136-175.
- Nicolas Sambanis. 2000. "Partition as a Solution to Ethnic War: An Empirical Critique of the Theoretical Literature" *World Politics* 52(4): 437-483.

Week 15: April 23 & April 25 - Wrap-up: What did we learn?

Questions for Critical Evaluation of Readings

1. What is the question that the author is trying to answer?
2. What are the central argument(s) presented in the paper in response to this question?
3. If the paper is analytical, what is the logic of the argument presented by the author? What are the assumptions that the logic of the argument depends on?
4. If the paper is empirical, what type of evidence is used to support the arguments? Are there other sources of data that you think might be more appropriate?
5. Can you think of alternative answers to the question that the author is trying to answer?
6. What empirical evidence would falsify the argument of the paper?
7. Do you think that the direction of the causal relationship is correct? Can the causality work in the opposite direction as well?
8. Did you find the claims of the reading convincing and interesting?
9. Can you think of any new hypotheses that come out of the theoretical explanations or your criticism, and that you can test empirically?
10. Can you think of any policy-relevant implications? Should governments change some of their current policies in light of the theory or the evidence presented in the paper?