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**PS 239****Selected Topics in International Relations:  
Strategy and Conflict**

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Syllabus v. 0.9  
Winter 2017**Professor Arthur Stein**

Bunche 3389b

310-825-1173

Office hours: T, Th 11a-12n and by appt.

stein@polisci.ucla.edu

<https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/17W-POLSCI239-2>

This course is a tour of work focusing on strategy amid conflict. Each week we will discuss, in depth, one book. We will talk about where the book fits in the field, where it attempts to take the field, we will assess the logic of the argument, the nature of the empirical work, its implications, etc. We will also discuss authorial choices, how the books are organized, how accessible they are, and what makes them good or bad books.

**Requirements:** Course attendance, reading, in-class presentations, and a paper. [If possible, you should attend international relations talks (see schedule on the next page).]

**Meetings and Readings (this schedule is tentative, and subject to change):****Introduction: IR as subfield ; Strategy and Conflict** (Jan. 9, 2017)

Kahler, Miles. 1997. Inventing International Relations: International Relations Theory Since 1945. In *New Thinking in International Relations Theory*, edited by Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, 20-53. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Lake, David A. 2011. Why “isms” Are Evil: Theory, Epistemology, and Academic Sects as Impediments to Understanding and Progress. *International Studies Quarterly* 55: 465-480.

Mearsheimer, John J. and Stephen M. Walt. 2013. Leaving Theory Behind: Why Simplistic Hypothesis Testing is Bad for International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations* 19(3): 427-457.

Reiter, Dan. 2015. Should We Leave Behind the Subfield of International Relations? *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 481-499.

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday** (Jan. 16, 2017)**Targeting amid Conflict** (Jan. 23, 2017)

Stanton, Jessica A. 2016. *Violence and Restraint in Civil War: Civilian Targeting in the Shadow of International Law*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

**Leaders and Conflict** (Jan. 30, 2017)

Horowitz, Michael, Allan C. Stam and Cali M. Ellis. 2015. *Why Leaders Fight*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

**Role of Publics** (Feb. 6, 2017)

Baum, Matthew and Philip B. K. Potter. 2015. *War and Democratic Constraint: How the Public Influences Foreign Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**Alliances amid Conflict** (Feb. 13, 2017)

Christia, Fotini. 2012. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Presidents' Day** (Feb. 20, 2017)

**Resolve and Conflict** (Feb. 27, 2017)

Kertzer, Joshua D. 2016. *Resolve in International Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**Rhetoric** (Mar. 6, 2017)

Krebs, Ronald R. 2015. *Narrative and the Making of US National Security*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

**Assessing Intentions** (Mar. 13, 2017)

Yarhi-Milo, Keren. 2014. *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**The Nuke Problem** (Mar. 20, 2017, exam week)

Debs, Alexandre and Nuno P. Monteiro. 2016. *Nuclear Politics: The Strategic Causes of Proliferation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

**IR Talks during winter quarter**

Jan. 12, 2017, 12pm: Jessica Stanton (Penn)

Jan. 23, 2017, 3pm: Joshua Kertzer (Harvard)

Jan. 27, 2017, 12:00pm, Bunche 10383: David Leblang (Virginia), "Migration, Dual Citizenship, and Global Capital Flows"

Feb. 6, 2017, 3pm: Rachel Stein (GW)

Feb. 13, 2017, 3pm: Lauren Prather (UCSD)

Publishers' short descriptions of the books:

Baum, Matthew and Philip B. K. Potter. 2015. *War and Democratic Constraint: How the Public Influences Foreign Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Why do some democracies reflect their citizens' foreign policy preferences better than others? What roles do the media, political parties, and the electoral system play in a democracy's decision to join or avoid a war? *War and Democratic Constraint* shows that the key to how a government determines foreign policy rests on the transmission and availability of information. Citizens successfully hold their democratic governments accountable and a distinctive foreign policy emerges when two vital institutions—a diverse and independent political opposition and a robust media—are present to make timely information accessible.

Matthew Baum and Philip Potter demonstrate that there must first be a politically potent opposition that can blow the whistle when a leader missteps. This counteracts leaders' incentives to obscure and misrepresent. Second, healthy media institutions must be in place and widely accessible in order to relay information from whistle-blowers to the public. Baum and Potter explore this communication mechanism during three different phases of international conflicts: when states initiate wars, when they respond to challenges from other states, or when they join preexisting groups of actors engaged in conflicts.

Examining recent wars, including those in Afghanistan and Iraq, *War and Democratic Constraint* links domestic politics and mass media to international relations in a brand-new way.

Christia, Fotini. 2012. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Some of the most brutal and long-lasting civil wars of our time involve the rapid formation and disintegration of alliances among warring groups, as well as fractionalization within them. It would be natural to suppose that warring groups form alliances based on shared identity considerations—such as Christian groups allying with Christian groups—but this is not what we see. Two groups that identify themselves as bitter foes one day, on the basis of some identity narrative, might be allies the next day and vice versa. Nor is any group, however homogeneous, safe from internal fractionalization. Rather, looking closely at the civil wars in Afghanistan and Bosnia and testing against the broader universe of fifty-three cases of multiparty civil wars, Fotini Christia finds that the relative power distribution between and within various warring groups is the primary driving force behind alliance formation, alliance changes, group splits and internal group takeovers.

Debs, Alexandre and Nuno P. Monteiro. 2016. *Nuclear Politics: The Strategic Causes of Proliferation*.

When do states acquire nuclear weapons? Overturning a decade of scholarship focusing on other factors, Debs and Monteiro show in *Nuclear Politics* that proliferation is driven by security concerns. Proliferation occurs only when a state has both the willingness and opportunity to build the bomb. A state has the willingness to nuclearize when it faces a serious security threat without the support of a reliable ally. It has the opportunity when its conventional forces or allied protection are sufficient to deter preventive attacks. This explains why so few countries have developed nuclear weapons. Unthreatened or protected states do not want them; weak and unprotected ones cannot get them. This powerful theory combined with extensive historical research on the nuclear trajectory of sixteen countries will make *Nuclear Politics* a standard reference in international security studies, informing scholarly and policy debates on nuclear proliferation - and US non-proliferation efforts - for decades to come.

Uses extensive historical evidence with 16 country case studies, more than 750 secondary sources, and 100 primary sources in eight languages

Using a simple and powerful theory, with the mathematical treatment in an appendix, readers can understand the pattern of proliferation without being bogged down with complex formulations

Readers will see the consequences of different foreign policy choices because the book conducts a compelling analysis of the different tools that states use to deter nuclear proliferation

Horowitz, Michael, Allan C. Stam and Cali M. Ellis. 2015. *Why Leaders Fight*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

The history of political events is made by people. It doesn't exist without us. From wars to elections to political protests, the choices we make, our actions, how we behave, dictate events. Not all individuals have the same impact on our world and our lives. Some peoples' choices alter the pathways that history takes. In particular, national chief executives play a large role in forging the destinies of the countries they lead. *Why Leaders Fight* is about those world leaders and how their beliefs, world views, and tolerance for risk and military conflict are shaped by their life experiences before they enter office—military, family, occupation, and more. Using in-depth research on important leaders and the largest set of data on leader backgrounds ever gathered, the authors of *Why Leaders Fight* show that within the constraints of domestic political institutions and the international system—who ends up in office plays a critical role in determining when and why countries go to war.

Proposes a new theory about how leaders shape national decisions about war and peace that will help bridge the gap between academics interested in the international system and everyday citizens who see the importance of leaders in their daily lives

By focusing on how the life experiences of leaders shape how they make decisions about international conflict, the book will appeal to academics outside of political science, such as those in psychology, public policy and history

Using both in-depth case studies and rigorous data analysis, the book will appeal to readers who care about case studies and examples, and to those interested in intensive data analysis

Kertzer, Joshua D. 2016. *Resolve in International Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Why do some leaders and segments of the public display remarkable persistence in confrontations in international politics, while others cut and run? The answer given by policymakers, pundits, and political scientists usually relates to issues of resolve. Yet, though we rely on resolve to explain almost every phenomenon in international politics—from prevailing at the bargaining table to winning on the battlefield—we don't understand what it is, how it works, or where it comes from. *Resolve in International Politics* draws on a growing body of research in psychology and behavioral economics to explore the foundations of this important idea.

Joshua Kertzer argues that political will is more than just a metaphor or figure of speech: the same traits social scientists and decision-making scholars use to comprehend willpower in our daily lives also shape how we respond to the costs of war and conflict. Combining laboratory and survey experiments with studies of great power military interventions in the postwar era from 1946 to 2003, Kertzer shows how time and risk preferences, honor orientation, and self-control help explain the ways leaders and members

of the public define the situations they face and weigh the trade-offs between the costs of fighting and the costs of backing down.

Offering a novel in-depth look at how willpower functions in international relations, *Resolve in International Politics* has critical implications for understanding political psychology, public opinion about foreign policy, leaders in military interventions, and international security.

Krebs, Ronald R. 2015. *Narrative and the Making of US National Security*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dominant narratives - from the Cold War consensus to the War on Terror - have often served as the foundation for debates over national security. Weaving current challenges, past failures and triumphs, and potential futures into a coherent tale, with well-defined characters and plot lines, these narratives impart meaning to global events, define the boundaries of legitimate politics, and thereby shape national security policy. However, we know little about why or how such narratives rise and fall. Drawing on insights from diverse fields, *Narrative and the Making of US National Security* offers novel arguments about where these dominant narratives come from, how they become dominant, and when they collapse. It evaluates these arguments carefully against evidence drawn from US debates over national security from the 1930s to the 2000s, and shows how these narrative dynamics have shaped the policies pursued by the United States.

Brings narrative into the center of mainstream debates over national security

Provides a broad sweep across US foreign policy since the 1930s to offer new interpretations of major historical episodes

Uses a wide range of methods, from quantitative content analysis (both computerized and human coding) to qualitative historical process-tracing

Stanton, Jessica A. 2016. *Violence and Restraint in Civil War: Civilian Targeting in the Shadow of International Law*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Media coverage of civil wars often focuses on the most gruesome atrocities and the most extreme conflicts, which might lead one to think that all civil wars involve massive violence against civilians. In truth, many governments and rebel groups exercise restraint in their fighting, largely avoiding violence against civilians in compliance with international law. Governments and rebel groups make strategic calculations about whether to target civilians by evaluating how domestic and international audiences are likely to respond to violence. Restraint is also a deliberate strategic choice: governments and rebel groups often avoid targeting civilians and abide by international legal standards to appeal to domestic and international audiences for diplomatic support. This book presents a wide range of evidence of the strategic use of violence and restraint, using original data on violence against civilians in civil wars from 1989 to 2010 as well as in-depth analyses of conflicts in Azerbaijan, El Salvador, Indonesia, Sudan, Turkey, and Uganda.

Demonstrates that in order to understand civil war violence, it is essential to consider the international context

Illustrates how civil war violence varies across cases of civil war, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the dynamics of violence in civil war

Dispels common myths that all civil wars involve severe atrocities against civilians

Draws attention to the strategic use of restraint in civil war - a phenomenon that existing research has largely ignored.

Yarhi-Milo, Keren. 2014. *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

States are more likely to engage in risky and destabilizing actions such as military buildups and preemptive strikes if they believe their adversaries pose a tangible threat. Yet despite the crucial importance of this issue, we don't know enough about how states and their leaders draw inferences about their adversaries' long-term intentions. *Knowing the Adversary* draws on a wealth of historical archival evidence to shed new light on how world leaders and intelligence organizations actually make these assessments.

Keren Yarhi-Milo examines three cases: Britain's assessments of Nazi Germany's intentions in the 1930s, America's assessments of the Soviet Union's intentions during the Carter administration, and the Reagan administration's assessments of Soviet intentions near the end of the Cold War. She advances a new theoretical framework—called selective attention—that emphasizes organizational dynamics, personal diplomatic interactions, and cognitive and affective factors. Yarhi-Milo finds that decision makers don't pay as much attention to those aspects of state behavior that major theories of international politics claim they do. Instead, they tend to determine the intentions of adversaries on the basis of preexisting beliefs, theories, and personal impressions. Yarhi-Milo also shows how intelligence organizations rely on very different indicators than decision makers, focusing more on changes in the military capabilities of adversaries.

*Knowing the Adversary* provides a clearer picture of the historical validity of existing theories, and broadens our understanding of the important role that diplomacy plays in international security.

Questions to ask as you read:

1. What is the author trying to accomplish?
  - What is the research question or puzzle animating the work?
  - What is being explained? Is it change over time or variation across units at one point in time? That is, what is the dependent variable and how does it vary?
  - What is the unit of analysis?
  - Why is the question/puzzle important? Is it important because of the substance of the issue or the state of theory?
  - Does the work actually present an answer to the question or an explanation for the puzzle?
2. What is the answer to the question/puzzle?
  - What provides an explanation for the phenomenon in question?
  - If the explanation includes constants, what are the explanatory variables (i.e., the independent variables) that explain changes in the phenomenon being explained (i.e., the dependent variable)?
  - What is the hypothesized link between the explanation [independent variable(s)] and what is being explained? What is the analytic logic, or mechanism, believed to link cause and effect? Is the relationship a direct one or an inverse one?
  - Is the argument falsifiable (are there observables that can be stipulated that if observed would lead us to reject the argument)?
  - Does the argument contain unobservable concepts? If so, what are the observable manifestations of these concepts, and are they valid indicators?
  - Could the causal relationship be reversed?
  - What does the explanation assume? Are the assumptions realistic, or does the author feel that this does not matter?
3. How is the explanation evaluated?
  - What evidence is provided to establish the link? Is it formal? Is it empirical?
  - If it is empirical, are the indicators used valid and reliable observable manifestations for the proposed cause and for the effect that is to be explained?
  - How are the observations to be analyzed drawn (i.e., case selection)? at random? with some logic?
  - Are the observations subject to selection effects?
  - What are alternative explanations for the phenomenon (plausible rival hypotheses)? Are they controlled for in the research design?
  - Are there omitted variables?
  - Does the specification for assessing covariation capture the analytic logic of the argument (i.e., including intervening variables, interaction effects of independent variables, and non-linear effects)?
  - What threats exist to inference?
4. In the end, what does it mean?
  - What are the limitations of the work?
  - How broadly do the findings generalize?
  - Do the specific findings have broader substantive or theoretical implications?

Material for professional socialization  
Arthur Stein

There is a lot of material about every aspect of being an academic, some of it published and some unpublished but available online, some of it general and some of it specific to political science. Here is a smattering to give you a sense, and I will post many of them online. You might find some of the following helpful. But don't overdo it. Thinking about how to do it is no substitute for doing it (this comment extends to methodology more broadly).

On political science as a vocation:

Weber, Max. 1946. Science as a Vocation. In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated and edited by Hans Heinrich Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 1291-1256. New York: Oxford University Press.

Keohane, Robert O. 2009. Political Science as a Vocation. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42(02): 359-363.

Lupia, Arthur. 2000. Evaluating Political Science Research: Information for Buyers and Sellers. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 33(1): 7-14.

Writing a literature review:

Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. Doing a Literature Review. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 39(1): 127-132.

McMenamin, Iain. 2006. Process and Text: Teaching Students to Review the Literature. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39 (1): 133-135.

Research and writing:

Becker, Howard Saul. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing it*. Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Leeds, Ashley. n.d. Writing a Research Paper for a Graduate Seminar in Political Science. Rice University.

Stimson, James A. n.d. Professional Writing in Political Science: A Highly Opinionated Essay. Paper, University of North Carolina. Retrieved from: [www.unc.edu/~jstimson/Writing.pdf](http://www.unc.edu/~jstimson/Writing.pdf) [Skip portions that are not relevant for you.]

Writing advice from other fields:

Econ: Dudenhefer, Paul. 2007. A Guide to Writing in Economics. Department of Economics, Duke University, 2nd edn.

Psych: Bem, Daryl J. 2003. Writing the Empirical Journal Article.

Silvia, Paul J. 2007. *How to write a lot: a practical guide to productive academic writing*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

## Publishing in political science

King, Gary. 2006. Publication, Publication. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39 (1): 119-125.

Spitzer, Robert J. 2005. Seven Modest Tips on Publishing. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38 (4): 746-747.

van Cott, Donna Lee. 2005. A Graduate Student's Guide to Publishing Scholarly Journal Articles. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38 (4): 741-743.

Yoder, Stephen. 2008. *Publishing Political Science*. State of the Profession Series Washington, DC: American Political Science Association.

Zinnes, Dina A. 1985. Reflections of a Past Editor. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 18 (3): 607-612.

## General advice on publishing

Donovan, Stephen K. 2005. How to Alienate Your Editor: A Practical Guide for Established Authors. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 36 (4): 238-242. Read pp. 240-242.

Germano, William P. 2008. *Getting it Published: A Guide for Scholars and Anyone Else Serious About Serious Books*. 2nd edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Greco, Albert N. 2005. A Bibliography of Books and Journal Articles on Scholarly Publishing. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 37(1): 48-54.

Reflections and a workbook from someone who for many years taught a workshop on getting published for graduate students and junior faculty:

Belcher, Wendy Laura. 2009. *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks: a guide to academic publishing success*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications. [This is a workbook.]

Belcher, Wendy Laura. 2009. Reflections on Ten Years of Teaching Writing for Publication to Graduate Students and Junior Faculty. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 40 (2): 184-200.

On writing and reading referee reports:

Martin, Brian. 2008. Writing a Helpful Referee's Report. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 39 (3): 301-306.

Martin, Brian. 2008. Surviving Referees' Reports. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 39 (3): 307-311.

On rejection:

Donovan, Stephen K. 2007. The Importance of Resubmitting Rejected Papers. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 38 (3): 151-155.

Weeks, Gregory. 2006. Facing Failure: The Use (and Abuse) of Rejection in Political Science. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39 (4): 876-882.

Picking a thesis committee:

Chisholm, Donald. 1987. Reflections on the Dissertation Committee. *PS: Political Science Politics* 20(02): 257-262.

## Writing a grant proposal:

Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. 1995. *The Art of Writing Proposals*. Social Science Research Council (SSRC).

## On dissertation and book:

Becker, Howard Saul and Pamela Richards. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing 2nd edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Scheppele, Kim Lane, David Pion-Berlin, Ruth Grant, Donald Chisholm and Bruce W. Jentleson. 1986. *Writing a Dissertation: Advice From Five Award Winners*. *PS: Political Science and Politics*

## On the job market::

Deardorff, Michelle Donaldson, Marianne Githens, Glen Halva-Neubauer, William E. Hudson, Grant Reeher and Ronald Seyb. 2001. Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Getting and Keeping a Job at a Private Liberal Arts College, But Your Graduate Advisor Didn't Tell You. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 34(4): 856-857.

Drezner, Daniel W. 1998. So You Want to Get a Tenure-Track Job . . . . *PS: Political Science & Politics* 31(3): 609-614.

Simien, Evelyn M. 2002. On the Market: Strategies for the Successful Job Candidate. *Political Science Politics* 35(03): 581-583.

Vick, Julia Miller, Jennifer S. Furlong, Rosanne Lurie and Mary Morris Heiberger. 2016. *The Academic Job Search Handbook*. Fifth edition. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

## On the job talk:

Axelrod, Robert. 1985. Tips for an Academic Job Talk. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 18(03): 612-613.

Hassner, Ron E. 2008. Trial By Fire: Surviving the Job Talk Qa. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41(4): 803-808.

## For advice on getting your dissertation published as a book:

Germano, William P. 2005. *From dissertation to book*. Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harman, Eleanor, Ian Montagnes, Siobhan McMenemy and Chris Bucci, eds. 2003. *The thesis and the book: a guide for first-time academic authors*. 2nd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [Especially chapter 4, Avoiding the warmed-over dissertation by William C. Dowling, and chapter 5, Thesis to book: what to get rid of and what to do with what is left by Olive Holmes.]

Jackson, Gerald and Marie Lenstrup. 2009. *Getting Published: A Companion for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press. [Especially chapter 3, From thesis to book, which can be downloaded at [http://www.niaspress.dk/files/excerpts/Jackson\\_extract.pdf](http://www.niaspress.dk/files/excerpts/Jackson_extract.pdf)]  
[Jackson's blog, Getting Published: Comments and advice for academic authors, can be found at <http://gettingpublished.wordpress.com>]

Jeydel, Alana S. and Julie Dolan. 2005. The Ins and Outs of Obtaining a Book Contract. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38 (4): 745-746.

Labella, Peter. 2005. The Other End of the Telescope (Tips from an Editor). *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38 (4): 747-748. [Part of a section, A Guide to Publishing Your First Book.]

Tips on a scholarly career, including getting published:

Boice, Robert. 1990. *Professors as writers: a self-help guide to productive writing*. Stillwater, Okla.: New Forums Press. [Boice has also written a lot on what makes for a successful junior faculty member and teacher.]

Boice, Robert. 1991. Quick Starters: New Faculty Who Succeed. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 48: 111-121.

Hauptman, Robert. 2005. How to Be a Successful Scholar: Publish Efficiently. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 36 (2): 115-119.

Johnson, W. Brad and Carol A. Mullen. 2007. *Write to the top!: how to be a prolific academic*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [This emphasizes the social and psychological components.]

Moxley, Joseph Michael. 1992. *Publish, don't perish: the scholar's guide to academic writing and publishing*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Moxley, Joseph Michael and Todd W. Taylor, eds. 1997. *Writing and publishing for academic authors*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

A useful listing of resources from UCLA Graduate Writing Center:  
<http://gsrc.ucla.edu/gwc/resources/writing-in-the-social-sciences.html>