

# Approved research grants 2021

In alphabetical order of the main applicant

## Research Projects



### Aila M. Matanock, University of California

**Project title:** Post-Conflict Policing and Community Perceptions

#### Project description

Civil wars cause more deaths now than interstate wars, and particularly thorny problems emerge when seeking to end these civil wars: many states experience conflict recurrence or massive crime waves rather than peace consolidation. Peacebuilding and broader statebuilding programs in these contexts seek to help states shift from fighting to providing effective security for their citizens, which then can provide the basis for rebuilding, deterring rebels and criminals alike. Due to its nature, and the centrality of voluntary compliance for state function, policing structures require buy-in from communities in which they operate. This buy-in is hard to achieve in post-conflict contexts because the state has been absent in some places and adversarial toward its citizens in others. New work classifies what policing structures look like in post-conflict contexts (Kronick 2019; Arriola, Dow, Matanock, & Mattes 2020), but these questions are otherwise understudied, so I propose a theoretical framework on citizens' perceptions toward policing structures that I analyze through three approaches: (1) compiling the existing survey data on trust, state satisfaction, and concerns about crime and analyzing it with this new data on policing structures across Latin America; (2) conducting focus groups to explore how people more broadly view policing structures across a comparative set of Latin American states; and (3) using survey experiments to examine change in these perceptions in states also in the region.



### Andrew Levin, Connecticut College

**Project title:** Peacekeeper-Inflicted Fatalities Dataset, 1990-2020

#### Project description

A growing body of research has focused on peacekeepers as targets of fatal attacks, but much less is known about the scope, causes, or consequences of fatalities inflicted by peacekeepers themselves. Absent this information, the collective understanding of peacekeepers as participants in political violence remains limited. To address this deficit, this project proposes to construct a comprehensive dataset of incidents in which peacekeepers—UN and non-UN—have killed combatants or civilians during peace operations in the post-Cold War era. Drawing on publicly available sources, the dataset will include temporal and sub-national spatial information on events involving peacekeeper-inflicted fatalities, and will be designed to ensure maximum compatibility with datasets used by researchers studying political violence and conflict management. The data will allow researchers to study policy-relevant issues such as variation in peacekeeper-inflicted fatalities across space and time; the relationship between peacekeeper-inflicted fatalities and attacks against peacekeeping personnel; and the impact of peacekeeper-inflicted fatalities on local and national conflict management efforts.



## Hannah Smidt, University of Zürich

**Project title:** Peacekeeping and people: Spatially disaggregated data on the infrastructure of people-centred peacebuilding in UN peacekeeping operations in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1995-2020

### Project description

In many war-affected countries, the United Nations (UN) deploys peacekeeping operations to protect civilian people from violence. Yet, people are not merely victims of violence. They retain agency in both producing and resisting violence, too. Recognizing this, UN peacekeeping operations increasingly embrace people-centred peacebuilding approaches. Beyond deploying blue-helmeted soldiers, the UN employs civilian peacekeepers and sets up radio stations to reach out to people and to strengthen their pro-peace agency. Despite a rapidly growing practical interest in people-centred approaches, we lack systematic information to evaluate their impact. To fill this gap, this project collects two novel cross-national datasets with spatially fine-grained, time-varying information on (i) the locations of field offices staffed with civilian peacekeepers and (ii) the coverage of UN radio in Sub-Saharan African countries in the period 1995-2020. The datasets are public goods for the research community interested in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and will be used by the PI to evaluate when and how people-centred peacebuilding contributes to pro-peace shifts in people's perceptions and attitudes.



## Hilary Matfess, University of Denver

**Project title:** Frontlines, Sidelines, and Behind the Scenes: Women's Involvement in Communal Violence in Africa

### Project description

We propose a mixed-methods project that investigates women's engagement with localized violence in Africa. Our project lies at the intersection of two underexplored phenomena: women's participation in conflict processes, and intercommunal violence. To better understand the gender dynamics of local violence, we conduct focus groups in Somalia and South Sudan, two countries with some of the highest rates of communal violence in recent years. Our research, which centers the experiences of women who have lived through recent communal conflicts, will provide novel insights into the factors that drive women to work for peace, contribute to violence, or remain as disengaged from these conflicts as possible. Our project dialogues with existing work on women's participation in political violence, but shifts focus toward women's interactions with and participation in community-based militias. Despite its persistence, communal violence and its gender dimensions remain poorly understood. Thus, our work in this area can contribute to the design of more effective local peacebuilding programs and the further development of scholarship on gender and conflict.



## Lise Morjé Howard, Georgetown University

**Project title:** Civil Wars, Illicit Trade, and UN Peacekeeping

### Project description

What are the most effective means of exerting external pressure to end civil wars? This project aims to answer the question by comparing external efforts in Liberia, which were largely successful, with those in the Central African Republic, which thus far have met with mixed results. Liberia and Central Africa are ideal cases for the research strategy of “paired comparison. They are very similar across many important variables (population size, large UN peacekeeping mission, neutral resources), but appear to differ along one crucial dimension: in Liberia, there was considerable external pressure to stem international trading networks in alluvial diamonds and other natural resources. In the Central African Republic, this pressure has not come to bear. In the Central African Republic, despite considerable military and diplomatic efforts, rebel groups have grown stronger and more numerous since the start of the UN peacekeeping mission in 2014. At the same time, the central government has grown weaker and more reliant on a nearly 8 billion SEK per year UN peace operation and other outside actors. UN peacekeepers and other external actors appear to have elided the economic drivers of conflict. This project will test this argument using a “paired, most similar” case design. It will draw on data from interviews with key decision-makers, analyze existing data on illicit networks and sanctions, and build new datasets to conduct content analyses of UN Security Council debates and Panel of Experts Reports.



## Mara Redlich Revkin, Georgetown University

**Project title:** Liability and Blame: How Civilians’ Involvement in War Affects their Victimization

### Project description

How does civilians’ involvement in war affect their victimization? International law prohibits attacks on civilians unless they take up arms. This rule of distinction casts civilians as either uninvolved bystanders or irregular fighters. It is an important source of restraint in war, but inconsistent with the realities of contemporary conflict. Particularly in cases of “rebel governance” where armed groups control territory like the Islamic State in Iraq, civilians are involved in war in many ways that fit neither category, e.g., as tax collectors, propagandists, or factory workers.

An important, unstudied question is whether the attitudes of soldiers and civilians in war zones reflect the legal dichotomy of civilians as bystanders/irregular fighters. Or do soldiers and conflict-affected populations recognize more complexity in civilians’ involvement in war? We will conduct two survey experiments with (1) U.S. soldiers and (2) Iraqis living in the conflict-affected city of Mosul. The findings will show, first, whether civilians’ involvement in war makes soldiers more likely to target them in contravention of international law, and second, whether Iraqis blame soldiers less for civilian casualties if the harmed civilians were involved in war. The results will allow us to formulate concrete guidance for defusing this crucial pressure point on restraint in war and compliance with law.



## Michael Wahman, Michigan State University

**Project title:** Urban Election Violence and Political Exclusion in Africa

### Project description

Electoral violence remains a serious concern in many African democracies. While violence exists in both urban and rural settings, violence particularly affects the political lives of Africa's urban populations. Violence during elections pose a significant security threat, but also threatens to distort political competition, participation, and the quality of democracy. We study two interrelated questions: How does fear of election violence limit political participation in urban Africa? Who are the populations most vulnerable to political exclusion due to violence? In answering these questions, we adopt a broad understanding of political participation, extending beyond the act of voting. We also put a particular emphasis on marginalized groups (by gender, ethnicity, partisanship), hypothesizing that electoral violence serves to perpetuate political inequalities. The study uses survey data combined with geo-coded social, demographic, and electoral data to map fear of violence and political participation. The first pilot will be fielded in the cities of Lusaka and Livingstone in Zambia, with plans to extend the study to Kenya in the future. The project will enhance our understanding of the political consequences of electoral violence and inform policies designed to enhance political participation, inclusion, and representation.



## Molly M. Melin, Loyola University Chicago

**Project title:** Ex-Combatant Entrepreneurship and Peacebuilding

### Project description

International efforts to end protracted conflicts have included sustained investments in combatants' disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). Nevertheless, while policy analysts have discussed the factors that contribute to successful DDR programs and scholars have reasoned about the macro conditions that facilitate successful peacebuilding, there is limited information known surrounding the factors that account for successful reintegration at the microlevel. We consider the impact of the entrepreneurship of ex-combatants on peaceful coexistence in a community. This project focuses on analyzing DDR from the economic perspective of ex-combatants. Examining the reintegration of Colombia's FARC excombatants offers a case study for understanding how veterans use various tools to return to civilian life. In particular, they have started entrepreneurship projects based on cooperatives founded in reintegration spaces, which have made it possible to skip several of the obstacles to reintegration, obtain reconciliation spaces with communities, and even become active employers in their regions. We will collect data on these projects and examine their relationship to local peace and violence.





## Phoebe Donnelly, International Peace Institute

**Project title:** Understanding Forced Marriage by Rebel Groups

### Project description

In recent conflicts many of the most violent and strongest rebel groups, including the Islamic State (IS), alShabaab, and Boko Haram, have perpetrated forced marriage. Despite the highly publicized uses of forced marriage and the fact that it is not a new form of violence, this specific tactic remains puzzling to researchers. Forced marriage, like other forms of conflict-related sexual violence, can be costly as it can turn populations against rebel groups. Organizing and sustaining systems of forced marriage also requires time and energy from leadership. This leaves the question of why some rebel groups perpetrate forced marriages. The prominent cases of IS, al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram underscore that understanding forced marriage is essential for academic and policy communities seeking to address conflict and to understand post-conflict dynamics in societies affected by forced marriage. In this project, I will explore the use of forced marriage as reflective of rebel groups' goals, organization, and relationship with their opponents, in a book length manuscript. Additionally, we will create a new quantitative dataset, that will inform an article manuscript, exploring possible motivations for the use of forced marriage.



## Pip Nicholson, Melbourne Law School

**Project title:** Peace Agreements, Constitutional Commitments and Sustainable Peace: Strengthening the Linkages

### Project description

Many peace agreements call for constitutional change to secure sustainable peace. Critical differences between peace agreements and constitutions, however, make implementation challenging, potentially jeopardising peace. This project explores how the links between peace agreements and constitutional implementation can be strengthened, while maintaining the integrity of both. For this purpose, it draws on an analytical framework developed by the applicants in earlier research funded by FBA, which identified four distinct components of post-conflict constitutional implementation (textual, technical, interpretive, and cultural) and demonstrated that both the process and substance of implementation are relevant to peace. This project uses as case studies the constitutional commitments made under the 1987 Indo-Lanka Accord in Sri Lanka and the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nepal; both cases in which implementation encountered serious problems. The project will investigate the different points at which failures of implementation occurred and use these to identify ways in which the links between peace agreements and constitutional implementation can be strengthened for the future.

## Research Workshops



### Roxani Krystalli, University of St Andrews

**Workshop title:** We are not good victims: The politics and hierarchies of victimhood in Colombia

#### Workshop description

This project supports a workshop for a book manuscript in development, exploring the politics and hierarchies of victimhood during transitions from violence. "This is the era of the victims," declared the High Commissioner for Peace in Colombia in his June 2014 address to the Colombian Senate. Yet, not all victims are created equal. Victimhood does not merely describe an experience of harm; it is also a political status and a site of power that shapes claim-making, relationships, and experiences of justice during transitions from violence. In this book, I ask: How is victimhood produced and performed—by representatives of the state and those who identify as victims alike—in order to be legible in the context of transitional justice processes? And what are the implications of hierarchies of victimhood for theories and experiences of justice during transitions from violence? Drawing from 15 months of in-depth ethnographic fieldwork in Colombia and from 157 interviews with state transitional justice officials and those who identify as victims, I analyze the bureaucratic production of hierarchies through mechanisms of transitional justice. I also explore the ways in which those who identify as victims challenge, subvert, or reinforce these dynamics. The findings have significant implications for theories of peacebuilding and transitional justice, as well as for practitioners and policymakers who interact with, advocate, or legislate on behalf of those recognized as victims of armed conflict.