

BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM  
**IR 411/PO 566 CONFLICT & CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN LATIN  
AMERICA**  
SYLLABUS  
FALL 2013  
WEDNESDAY 1-4  
Location: 152 BSR, First Floor Conference Room

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This upper-level undergraduate seminar focuses on conflict and conflict resolution in Latin America. The region lends itself to such an exploration given its long history as independent republics and the many internal and foreign challenges faced over these years. Our concerns center on three key questions as we examine both frameworks and a few select cases: why conflict arises in the first place, what forces cause it to expand, and how it is that some are able to be resolved while others continue to bedevil.

Throughout the history of the Latin American republics, basic differences between contending forces have all too often produced violent confrontations as they struggle to maintain or advance their causes. Some of these conflicts have involved ethnic groups chafing under colonial control or social groups seeking access to resources to meet basic needs. Others have been provoked by the efforts of dominant institutions to retain or expand their influence or by competing ideologies and their supporters using violence as they try to impose new models of governance. Still others have resulted from wars between neighbors over disputed boundaries or competition for control of natural resources.

If gaining an understanding of the origins, dynamics, and consequences of conflict is one core concern of the seminar, an equally significant focus is on the variety of ways that conflicts are resolved.

What are some of the mechanisms employed to move beyond violence to some form of resolution that produces peaceful and lasting solutions? How does negotiation take place and what are the drivers that generate it? What are the forces – such as leadership; external actors; favorable local, regional, or international developments; or specific institutional dynamics – that contribute to some form or other of peaceful resolution? For each of the conflicts we consider, we will try to identify the most important elements involved in producing an outcome the contending parties can work with – or should be able to if only they would agree.

To summarize what we have learned from the section of the seminar dealing with conflict and conflict resolution frameworks, you will divide up into two groups (why conflict? and why conflict resolution?) to prepare short papers on the key elements of each to discuss in class (details below).

If conflict theories give us frameworks for our why, what, and how analyses, case studies provide the specific information we need to try to answer these key questions. Among the many we could select to explore in greater detail during the semester, we will consider a total of ten individual cases of conflict.

Eight are historical (i.e., they occurred in the distant or recent past and have been resolved in one fashion or another), while two are contemporary and ongoing. Of the historical cases we will study, four involved wars between countries and four, internal or guerrilla wars. Each of you will choose one of these historical cases to explore more deeply in a short individual research paper (details below).

We will then consider how the two contemporary cases selected are coping with the internal effects of guerrilla and/or drug trafficking violence and how they are affected by a variety of external factors. Such a combination has generated the term “intermestic” to characterize their natures and dynamics. You will select one of these cases to prepare a group research paper with some of your classmates on one or more of its most significant aspects (details below).

The following are the historical and contemporary cases we will cover during the semester:

1. Historical

a. Wars between countries

- 1) War of the Triple Alliance, 1864-70 (Paraguay vs. Brazil, Argentina, & Uruguay)
- 2) War of the Pacific, 1879-83 (Bolivia & Peru vs. Chile)
- 3) Chaco War, 1932-35 (Paraguay vs. Bolivia)
- 4) Peru-Ecuador, 1807-1998 (the longest lasting boundary dispute in the Western Hemisphere)

b. Internal or guerrilla wars

- 1) Guatemala, 1960-96
- 2) El Salvador, 1972-92
- 3) Nicaragua, 1972-79
- 4) Peru, 1980-92 +

2. Contemporary internal and “intermestic” conflicts

- a. Colombia and its ongoing internal war since 1960 which includes both guerrilla and drug trafficker elements and new efforts to find peace through negotiations abroad
- b. Mexico and the “war” on the drug cartels, a long-standing issue given a higher priority resulting in much higher levels of violence during the Calderón government (2006-12)

You will be expected to complete the assigned readings for each class to enhance our discussion of the week’s topic or case. For the conflict and conflict resolution frameworks and the historical cases, I will ask some of

you each week to select one of the readings for preparation of a one-page (double-spaced) summary analysis of key points for two-minute briefings in class the following week (a component of your participation grade). For the contemporary conflicts, some members of each group will prepare and present the one-page of key points for each reading.

Whether preparing readings from historical or contemporary cases, your one-page analysis should be sure to focus on key elements in the case that explain why the conflict occurred and/or those that address why conflict gets resolved. You do not want to write a descriptive summary.

## **Grading**

1. **Participation: (20%)** Based on the quality of reading preparations and presentations, seminar comments and discussion, and paper presentations during the semester. Extra credit will be given for attending Latin American Studies Program events.
2. **Short Group Paper on Why Conflict OR Why Conflict Resolution: (10%)** Three to four (maximum) pages (double-spaced) providing the key reasons why conflict occurs (group 1) or the key factors explaining conflict resolution (group 2), which should include a brief narrative on each and the most relevant bibliography identifying sources used.  
**Due Mon 30 September**
3. **Individual Research Papers:\* (30%)** Limit of 10-12 pages of text (double spaced, 12 font, one inch minimum margins) plus citations and bibliography (required), and tables, if any. These will cover one of the historical cases (the War of the Triple Alliance, the War of the Pacific, the Chaco War, the Ecuador-Peru border dispute, one of the three guerrilla wars in Central America – Guatemala, Nicaragua, or El Salvador, or Peru’s Shining Path “people’s war”), and will apply conflict theory to the part of the case you are analyzing to assess either how/why it arose or how/why it was resolved. It will conclude with a critical analysis of the value of the conflict or conflict resolution theory framework you chose to use for the case you selected.

**Paper proposals due on W 25 Sept. Completed papers due after presentation and discussion on the day the case is**

**considered. (For the specific dates, see class topics and readings schedule below.)**

**\*A revise and resubmit option is available for individual papers which are complete and submitted on time. If you choose this option, the grade you receive on the resubmission will be your final grade for the paper. (No rewrite option for either group paper)**

- 4. Group Research Papers (40%)** Limit of 15-17 pages of text (double spaced, 12 font, one inch minimum margins) plus citations and bibliography (required), and tables, if any. This collaborative paper is to cover some significant aspect or aspects of one of the two ongoing contemporary conflicts we are considering – Colombia or Mexico. You will work with those who have selected the same case to produce a single research paper representing your joint efforts, for which each member of the group will receive the same grade.

**Proposals for these group research papers due W 23 Oct; final paper on Mexico due W 13 Nov, and on Colombia, W 4 Dec**

## **Readings**

There are no required texts for this course, but several copies of two of the professor's books on cases considered in the seminar will be available in the course books section of the Boston University Barnes & Noble Bookstore for purchase [*Power, Institutions, and Leadership in War and Peace: Lessons from Peru and Ecuador, 1995-1998* (with David Mares) Texas 2013 (paperback edition); also *Shining Path of Peru*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, St. Martins 1994].

You are also encouraged to subscribe to the *Latin American Weekly Report* (LAWR), which covers current developments in the region. It is available on-line for 10 weeks at a special reduced student rate of \$25. You may sign up during the first or second meeting of the course. We will be discussing relevant current events in the region at each seminar meeting during the semester, with a particular focus on ongoing and potentially emerging conflicts.

In addition, there will be cards available for significantly reduced prices for a semester subscription to *The New York Times*, which includes both paper copies and on-line access. You may complete the cards and mail them in or subscribe on-line.

Readings for the classes will be available in the Course Documents section of the course website. You may access IR 411/PO 566 Blackboard (13FALLCASIR411A1) only with your BU user name and password at:

**<http://blackboard.bu.edu>**

This course website will also contain additional course-related comments from the professor which will be posted in Announcements; other material, such as the syllabus and paper writing guidelines will be found in Course Information.

### **Classes, Topics, and Readings**

W 4 Sept Introduction: A Latin American Conflict and Conflict Resolution Narrative

In addition to introducing ourselves to each other, going over the syllabus, answering questions and the like, we will also discuss the broad sweep of conflict in Latin America from pre-Conquest to the present.

W 11 Sept Conflict Theories & Frameworks: Why Does Conflict Occur?

#### Overview:

Pope Atkins, "Warfare and Its Approximations," *Latin America and the Caribbean in the International System*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), esp. 317-18.

#### External:

William Zartman, "Analyzing Intractability," in Chester A. Crocker et al., eds. *Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict* (Washington DC: United States Institute for Peace – USIP – Press, 2005), 47-58.

Edward D. Mansfield & Jack Snyder, "Turbulent Transitions: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War," in Crocker et al., eds. *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Washington DC: USIP Press, 2007), 161-76

Internal:

James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27:1 (Feb 1962), 5-19

Samuel P. Huntington, "Revolution & Political Order," in *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale, 1968), 264-75

Jack Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution: The Third Generation," *World Politics* 32:3 (Apr 1980), 425-53

Robert Dix, "Why Revolutions Succeed & Fail," *Polity* 16:3 (Spring 1984), 423-46

W 18 Sept Conflict Resolution Theories & Frameworks: Why and How Does Conflict Get Resolved?

Zartman, "Analyzing Intractability," 58-62

David Scott Palmer, "Nepal's Multiple Challenges in Comparative Perspective," Final Report for USAID, October 3, 2003, 13-20

Álvaro de Soto, "International Missions & the Promotion of Peace & Democracy," in Tommie Sue Montgomery, ed. *Peacemaking and Democratization in the Western Hemisphere* (Miami: North-South Center Press, 2000), 1-8

Blanca Antonini, "Scenarios for Multilateral Approaches to Political Transitions in the Western Hemisphere," in Montgomery, ed. *Peacemaking*, 303-14

Virginia Bouvier, "Toward an Integrated Framework for Building Peace," in Virginia M. Bouvier, ed. *Colombia: Building Peace in a Time of War* (Washington DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press – USIP, 2009), 413-36

Paul Wehr & John Paul Lederach, "Mediating Conflict in Central America," *Journal of Peace Research*, 28:1 (1991), 85-98

Today, we will also discuss the eight historical cases we will be considering over the next several weeks. Following this, you will submit your first and second choices of cases for your short individual research paper. You will submit your written proposal for the paper by e-mail by the end of the week for my comments, with the final version **due in class W 25 Sept.**

- W 25 Sept Explanations for Conflict and Conflict Resolution  
Class discussion and preparation of two short group papers (about 3-4 pages) which provide the key reasons why conflict occurs (group 1) and the key factors explaining conflict resolution (group 2), which should include a brief narrative on each and the most relevant bibliography, annotated in 20-30 words to indicate the significance of each source used.  
**This group paper due in final form by e-mail Mon 30 Sept**
- W 2 Oct No Class: Asociación Latinoamericana de Ciencia Política (ALACIP) Meeting in Bogotá, Colombia  
Use this time to pursue your research for your short individual paper on the historical case you have selected.
- W 9 Oct External Conflict & Resolution I: The Major Latin American Wars, 1864-1935
- a. The War of the Triple Alliance, 1864-70 (Paraguay vs. Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay)
- Atkins, "Warfare," 320-21



Diego Abente, "The War of the Triple Alliance: Three Explanatory Models," *Latin American Research Review*, 22:2 (1987), 47-69

b. The War of the Pacific, 1879-83 (Chile vs. Bolivia and Peru)

Atkins, "Warfare," 322

David Werlich, *Peru: A Short History* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), 106-21

c. The Chaco War, 1932-35 (Paraguay vs. Bolivia)

Atkins, "Warfare," 326

Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (New York: Knopf, 1968), 816-19.

W 16 Oct External Conflict and Resolution II: The Peru-Ecuador Border Dispute, 1807-1998

Atkins, "Warfare," 334-35

David Scott Palmer, "Missed Opportunities and Misplaced Nationalism: Continuing Challenges to the Multilateral Peacekeeping Efforts in the Peru-Ecuador Border Conflict," in Montgomery, ed., *Peacemaking*, 247-54

Gabriel Marcella & Richard Downes, "The Ecuador-Peru Dispute & Conflict Resolution in the Americas," in Gabriel Marcella & Richard Downes, eds. *Security Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere: Resolving the Ecuador-Peru Conflict* (Miami: North South Center Press, 1999), 211-27

David Scott Palmer, "Overcoming the Weight of History: 'Getting to Yes' in the Peru-Ecuador Border Dispute," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 12:2 (June 2001), 29-46.

David Mares & David Scott Palmer, *Power, Institutions, and Leadership in War and Peace: Lessons from Peru and*

*Ecuador, 1995-1998*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012).  
\* Paperback edition, 2013, available at the BU Barnes & Noble Bookstore for \$19

W 23 Oct Internal Conflict and Resolution II: Peru's Shining Path and its Maoist "People's War," 1980-92+

David Scott Palmer, "Terror in the Name of Mao: Revolution and Response in Peru," in Robert J. Art & Louise Richardson, eds., *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (Washington DC: USIP Press, 2007), 195-220

Carlos A. Parodi, "Peru," in David P. Forsythe, ed. *Encyclopedia of Human Rights*, Vol. 4 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 217-27

Lisa J. Laplante & Kimberly Theidon, "Truth with Consequences: Justice and Reparations in Post-Truth Commission Peru," *Human Rights Quarterly* 29 (2007), 228-50

David Scott Palmer, ed. *Shining Path of Peru*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994) \* Available in used copies at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore

**Proposals due for group research papers on the contemporary conflicts of Mexico or Colombia**

W 30 Oct Internal Conflict and Resolution I: Central America's Civil Wars

a. Overview

Wehr and Lederach, "Mediating Conflict," 85-98

Atkins, "Warfare," 338-42

b. Guatemala, 1960-96

Susanne Jonas, "Guatemala," in Howard Wiarda & Harvey Kline, eds. *Latin American Politics and Development*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Boulder: Westview, 2011), 305-35

\_\_\_\_\_, "Democratization Through Peace: The Difficult Case of Guatemala," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 42-4 (Winter 2000), 9-38

c. El Salvador, 1972-92

Christine J. Wade, "El Salvador," in Christine Wade & Thomas Walker, *Understanding Central America*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Boulder: Westview, 2009), 111-34

Charles T. Call, "Assessing El Salvador's Transition from Civil War to Peace," Stedman, et al., *Ending Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 383-420

d. Nicaragua, 1972-79

Thomas W. Walker and Christine J. Wade, *Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boulder: Westview, 2010, 25-83

Kenneth Roberts, "Bullying and Bargaining: The United States, Nicaragua, and Conflict Resolution in Central America," *International Security*, 15:2 (Fall 1990), 677-102

W 6 Nov Contemporary Internal Conflicts: Mexico and Drugs

José Luis Velasco, *Insurgency, Authoritarianism, and Drug Trafficking in Mexico's "Democratization"* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 89-163

Laurie Freeman & Jorge Luis Serra, "Mexico: The Militarization Trap," in Coletta A. Youngers & Eileen Rosen, eds. *Drugs & Democracy in Latin America: The Impact of U.S. Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 263-302

Luis Astorga, "Mexico: Drugs and Politics," in Menno Vellinga, ed. *The Political Economy of the Drug Industry: Latin America and the International System* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004) 85-102

Hal Brands, *Mexico's Narco-Insurgency and US. Counterdrug Policy* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, May 2009)

W 13 Nov Contemporary Internal Conflicts: Mexico and Drugs

Class discussion and group research paper presentations

**Mexico group research paper due**

W 20 Nov Contemporary Internal Conflicts: Colombia's Guerrilla Wars

Peter Waldmann, "Colombia and the FARC: Failed Attempts to Stop Violence and Terrorism in a Weak State," in Art & Richardson, eds., *Democracy and Counterterrorism*, 221-60

Cynthia J. Arnson & Theresa Whitfield, "Third Parties and Intractable Conflicts: The Case of Colombia," in Crocker et al., eds. *Grasping the Nettle*, 231-68

Francisco E. Thoumi, "Illegal Drugs in Colombia: From Illegal Economic Boom to Social Crisis," in Menno Vellinga, ed. *The Political Economy of the Drug Industry*, 70-84

María Clemencia Ramírez Lemus, et al., "Colombia. A Vicious Cycle of Drugs and War," in Coletta A. Youngers & Eileen Rosen, eds. *Drugs and Democracy in Latin America*, 99-142

W 27 Nov Thanksgiving Vacation: No Class

W 4 Dec Contemporary Internal Conflicts: Colombia's Guerrilla Wars

Class discussion and group research paper presentations

**Colombia group research paper due**

W 11 Dec Conclusions: What Have We Learned?

An end-of-semester revisiting of the conflict and conflict resolution theories we considered early in the seminar now that we have pursued a number of Latin American cases and can see how both have actually worked out in practice. What is the best combination of elements we can come up with which seem to be most useful in explaining real world examples?